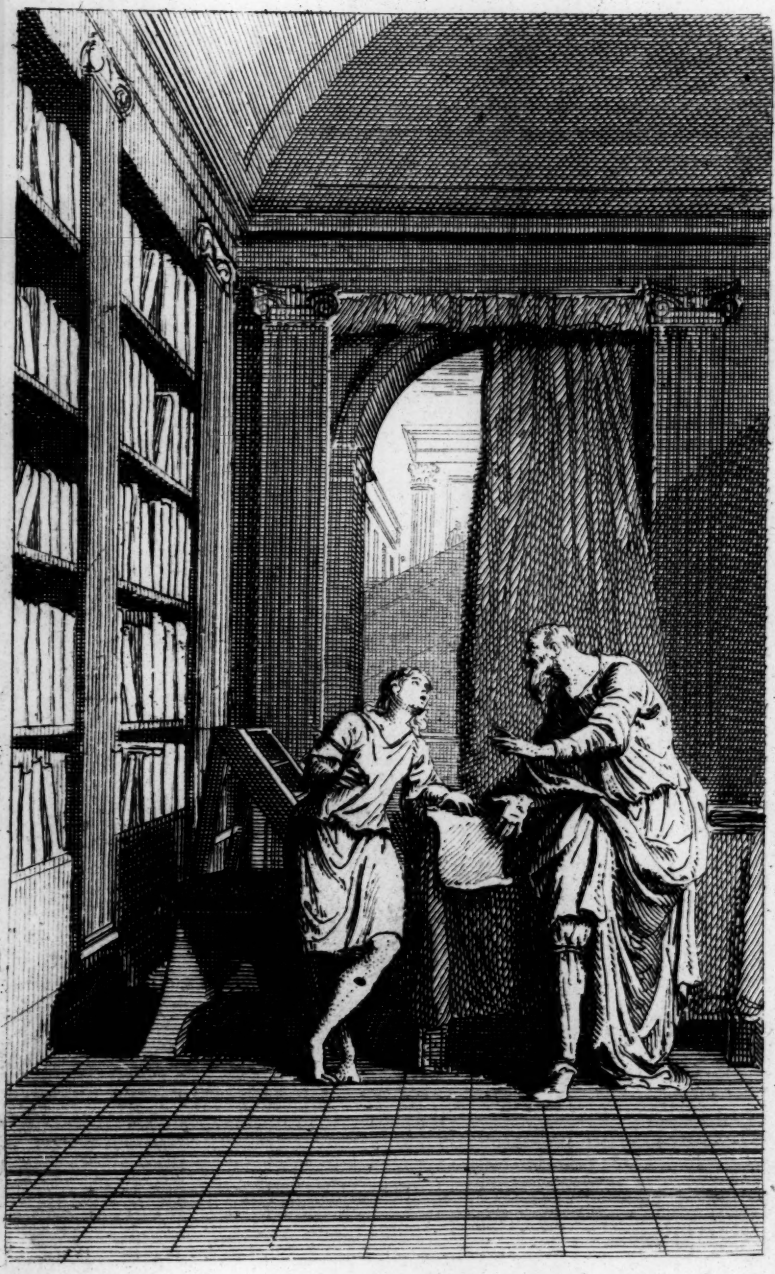

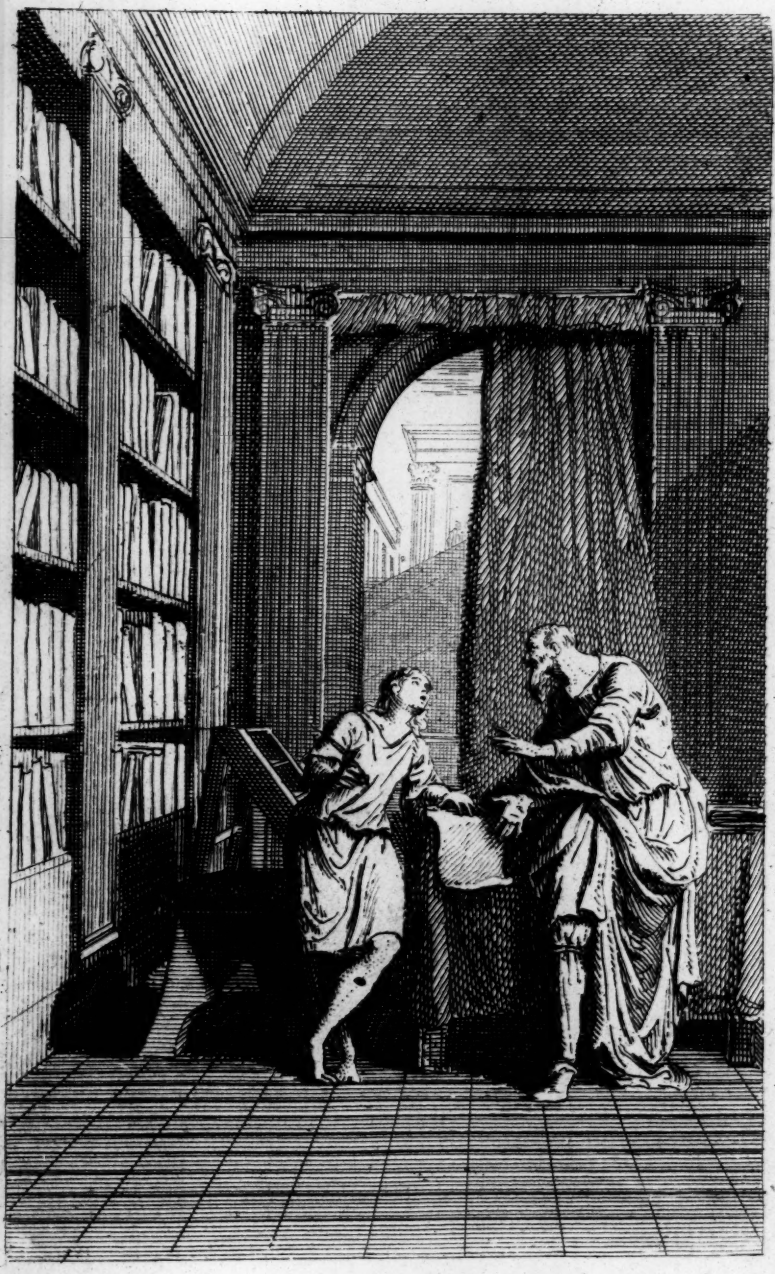

THE GENTLEMAN'S LIBRARY:

CONTAINING

RULES for CONDUCT

IN ALL

PARTS of LIFE.

The FIFTH EDITION,
Corrected and Enlarged.

Written by a GENTLEMAN.

Purpureus latè qui ſplendeat, unus, &alter
Aſſuitur pannus.——— HOR.

LONDON:

Printed for D. BROWNE, without Temple-Bar; G. KEITH, in Gracechurch-Street; J. RICHARDSON, in Pater-Noſter-Row; and B. LAW and Co. in Ave-Mary-Lane.

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PREFACE

TO THE

READER.

IN a Book that has not a *Dedication* prefix'd, there is a ſort of Neceſſity of a *Preface*; becauſe it looks odd to ſkip from a Title-Page, to an Introduction. However, I did not alone conſult that Part of Decency in my Reaſons for this *Preface*, but penned it, with regard that I thought ſomething ought to be ſaid on the Work in general.

PREFACE

The kind Entertainment the Town gave to the *Lady's Library*, the Succeſs it met with, and the great Call there was for it, even from the moſt diſtant Counties, though it was ſwell'd out into three Volumes, and ſold at a pretty handſome Price, made me think that a GENTLEMAN'S LIBRARY might be a Copy of no great Hazard to a Bookſeller, and make an Edition of particular Uſe and Service to young Gentlemen coming into the World.

Whatever Advantages we have from *Education*, from *Example*, or *Precept*, on our firſt Entrance on the Stage of Life, we meet with Accidents and Temptations to withdraw us from *Morality*, and ſtand in need of *ſupplemental* Inſtruction, and a new Director,

rector, to confirm us in our Conduct. Views of *Pleaſure*, and *Inſtability* of *Humour*, lead us into a thouſand *Inconveniences*, againſt which, we are neither armed by *Prudence*, *Reaſon*, or *Continence*.

As to the *Precepts* contained in this Treatiſe, I have put them together, according to my Power, in a Manner that may make them *uſeful* and *entertaining*. To this End, as often as my Memory ſerved, I have interſpers'd them with *Quotations* in *Poetry*, *Examples* from *Hiſtory*, and *Axioms* that were in Credit with the Sages of *Antiquity*. The gay Part of the World are ſo ſtartled at *Morality*, when merely ſuch, when they think it is all *dry* and *crabbed*, and the whole *Volume* penn'd for *Inſtruction*, without any Regard to their *Pleaſure*,

Pleaſure, that they cannot perſuade themſelves to give it a Peruſal, or hold any Converſation with a Book, that does not by ſome Art inſinuate itſelf to their Fancies, and give them *Diverſion*, to make the *Uſe* digeſted:

Sed veluti, pueris abſynthia tetra medentes
Cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum
Contingunt dulci mellis flavòque liquore.——

ſays *Lucretius*; as we anoint the Rims of the Cup with Honey, to engage Children to drink up the bitter Potion, ſo I have laboured to humour the Squeamiſhneſs of the Times, ſoften the Harſhneſs of *Diſcipline* and *Duty*, and give them down in a *Vehicle* that is ſweet and palatable: And to be yet the leſs deſpotic and magiſterial in my Rules, I have all along endeavour'd

vour'd, rather to *recommend* than *inforce*, to *counſel* than *oblige*; for as Monſieur *Bruyere*, with much Modeſty, premiſed to his Book, *What I have written is not deſigned for* Maxims; *thoſe are like* Laws *in* Morality; *and I have neither* Genius *nor* Authority *to qualify me for a* Legiſlator.

Demoſthenes, in an *Oration*, to perſuade the *Athenians* not to change any Law upon ſmall and frivolous Pretences, informs us of a Cuſtom which prevail'd among the *Locrians*, That whatever Man ſhould propoſe to make any new Law, muſt do it with a Rope about his Neck; which he was to be ſtrangled in, if he did not carry his Point. This was ſuch a Guard and Defence to the Laws, that they had but one new one made

made in more than two hundred Years. Had the preſcribing Rules in Morality now ſtood on the ſame Terms of Danger, I ſhould have been leſs forward in venturing to give this Aſſiſtance: However, I ſhould have evaded the Penalty, becauſe, as I ſhall anon more particularly obſerve, I have intruded but very little *Novelty*: If I have injured the *Matter* in the *Diſpoſition*, and diſcredited *good Counſel* by an *aukward Delivery*, I am at the Stake, and muſt ſubmit to the Cenſure; but hope the World will not proceed with Rigour on Faults that owe their Being to an Impotence of Judgment, and Want of Power in Nature, to diſcharge myſelf with more Sufficiency.

CON-

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THE

THE

GENTLEMAN'S LIBRARY.

INTRODUCTION.

BEING the other night in the company of ſome ladies of a polite converſation, and the mixture of ſexes turning the diſcourſe upon the raillery of each other, the briſk Florimel, and her witty aſſociates, ran hard upon the mens want of conduct. Celadon, who was the moſt induſtrious advocate for the party, with an obliging ſmile and inſinuating air, ſaid, that he hoped the ladies now would not give his ſex the opportunity of retorting that reflection upon them, ſince their conduct, in every ſtage of life, was to be regulated by their library: that if the advice to a daughter was too compendious to reform all their errors, yet three volumes of advice could not fail of correcting every *faux pas*. Florimel eaſily perceived the malice of Celadon's meaning, and ſtriking in with his irony, told him, ſhe was not ſo partial to the petticoat, but that ſhe would venture

to confeſs, ſhe believed, that many a female reader of thoſe leſſons of morality would ſtill, through indolence or miſapprehenſion, remain unimproved, and ſtick to the darling indecorums of frail nature, cuſtom, and faſhion: that ſhe wiſhed the ſame learned lady, who had wrote ſo happily for her own ſex, would have employed ſome few pages on thoſe lordly creatures, who priding in the advantages of nature and ſuperior endowments, think themſelves above the guidance of precepts: that for her part, ſhe had no ſuch elevated notions of their capacities or oeconomy; had ſeen them carried away by caprice and humour as much as weak women, and believed could prove them as much the ſubject of poetic ſatire. What ſays Dryden?

Men are but children of a larger growth;
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And ſuch a craving too, and full as vain:
And yet the ſoul, ſhut up in her dark room,
Viewing ſo clear abroad, at home ſees nothing;
But like a mole in earth, buſy and blind,
Works all her folly up, and caſts it outwards,
To the world's open view.——

Celadon here interrupting her progreſs in quotations, told her, frailty was ſo conſpicuous and epidemical, that he did not care to put her to the trouble of farther proofs; nor had any thoughts of entering into a debate with her, to aſſert the men free from faults, either in conduct or principles: that he would rather chuſe to impeach them of infirmity, but that it might be feared the proſecution would ſooner harden than convert. Not that he diſputed, but by artful methods, and apt inſinuations, virtue, prudence, juſtice, and conduct, like the mechanical part of life, might be taught and made acceptable: that as only a dull and impenetrable ear could find no charms, no ſenſation in muſic; ſo only abſence of reaſon, and ſtubborn ignorance, could reſiſt the harmony of virtue feelingly recommended: for that libertiniſm, which ſome wild young

young fellows, for want of more happy education, miſtake for liberty, ſubjects them to harder tyrants than their dreaded tutors and maſters; even to their own vicious inclinations, which, as it were, break looſe upon them. The caſe is very different with men of ſenſe and ſolidity; for, paſſing from minority to manhood, they alter not the government, though they change the governor. In the room of the hired inſtructor of their youth, they entertain that divine guide and governor of human life, reaſon, under whoſe ſubjection alone men are properly ſaid to live in freedom: for they only live at their own will, who have learned to will as they ought; and that freedom of will which appears in unconſtrained appetites, and unreaſonable actions, is mean and narrow, and accompanied with much repentance.

Florimel, perceiving Celadon to pauſe here, took the opportunity to tell him, that his declamation had, in her opinion, all the force and vigour the ſubject required; that he, who could manage an argument ſo well at random, without the aid of a preſcribed theme to regulate his diſcourſe, muſt be capable of improving his ideas, when directed to a certain proper head; that ſhe thought it was the duty of ſuch a man to attempt the reformation of his degenerate ſex; and ſhe hoped the company would join with her, to lay him under an indiſpenſable obligation of aſſuming that office.

Celadon bluſhed, and bowed at the compliment; but was abſolutely for throwing off a taſk, which he knew muſt be very troubleſome to himſelf, and perhaps no leſs diſtaſteful to the world: he told Florimel, he was loth to ſuſpect ſhe meant to banter him ſo gravely; but that he rather feared ſhe had entertained an opinion of his parts, which he was ſatisfied his performance could never anſwer; aſſured her that his talk was like the wild notes of birds in the woods, that could never be brought to any regular muſic; and declared, as a female hand had ſo excellently gone through one part of the deſign, he thought it

would be inſolence in one of his ſex to attempt its counterpart, which ſhe might, perhaps, at her leiſure, comply to proſecute.

Florimel again interpoſed here, and told him, that neither his own modeſty, nor the uncertainty of that expectation, could excuſe him; that ſhe now ſpoke the determination of the aſſembly, who had elected him ſpeaker in the cauſe; and that no fine could be accepted to diſcharge him from the ſervice: that therefore farther denials would be uſeleſs; their ſentence was peremptory, and his rhetoric expected on thoſe topics, out of which he could ſtrike the moſt profitable leſſons for human life.

Celadon found it was in vain to cavil at their reſolutions; but ſaid, it was very hard he muſt ſtand condemned when the evidence on his ſide had plainly brought him in not guilty: however, if he muſt ſubmit to the ſentence without appeal, he ſhould expect the liberty of offering ſome terms of compoſition, which muſt be admitted in his favour: he had heard that Diogenes, ſeeing a youth devour his victuals too greedily, gave his tutor a box on the ear, and that deſervedly, as judging it the fault of him that had not taught, not of him that had not learned better manners. I have very ſtrong apprehenſions, continued he, that I ſhall deſerve the fate of the aukward pedant. The world will be ſo little improved by my tuition, that the blame will naturally fall more upon the impotence of my diſcipline, than the depravity of my ſcholars. But if I muſt aſſume the philoſopher, and, like the aſs in the proverb, carry myſteries, depend upon it that I will make my burthen as light as poſſible; never put myſelf to the trouble of communicating my thoughts in new language, whenever I can recollect the ſame notions better expreſſed to my hand, but tranſplant the obſervations of the polite, to make amends, as often as I can, for my imperfection. And I ſhall expect this farther indulgence from my audience, that having received the general heads of things, they would ſupply the reſt by their own induſtry,

duſtry, and make their reaſon and memoirs the guides to their own invention and improvement.

For people ſhould look on the diſcourſe of others only as a kind of firſt principle or ſeed, which they muſt take care to cheriſh and increaſe. For the mind, ſays Plutarch, 'requires not, like an earthen veſſel, to 'be filled up; convenient food and aliment, only will 'inflame it with a deſire of knowledge, and ardent love 'of truth.' Now, as he that comes to borrow fire, if he ſtay too long warming himſelf with his neighbour, oftentimes diſappoints his own buſineſs; ſo the man that comes to be inſtructed by another, if he think not himſelf obliged to ſet fire (if I may ſo call it) to his own invention, and exert his own faculties, he may get the name of a proficient, as we get a colour by ſitting by the fire, but ſhall never diſpel the darkneſs of his underſtanding by the light of foreign precepts.

The company ſat ſo ſilent and attentive, that Celadon began to think he was already turned declaimer; and, ſtopping ſhort, with ſome confuſion, begged leave to withdraw, and furniſh himſelf by contemplation with the materials he ſhould want in the diſcharge of that office they were pleaſed to impoſe on him; having promiſed that he would endeavour to oblige them with all the diſpatch in his power; and that they ſhould not long expect the firſt eſſay of his performance, which he deſigned to lay out on the ſubject of education.

EDUCATION.

THE care of education is a work of the higheſt moment, as all the advantages or miſcarriages of a man's life are, in a great meaſure, dependent on it. It is the duty therefore of parents to infuſe into the untainted youth early notices of juſtice and honour, that ſo the poſſible advantages of good parts may not take an evil turn, nor be perverted to baſe and unworthy purpoſes. It has been the compariſon of a celebrated author, that as marble in the quarry ſhews none of its inherent beauties, till the ſkill of the poliſher fetches out the colours, makes the ſurface ſhine, and diſcovers every ornamental cloud, ſpot, and vein that runs through the body of it: ſo education, after the ſame manner, when it works upon a noble mind, draws out to view every latent virtue and perfection, which without ſuch helps are never able to make their appearance. Nor is the want of education a private injury alone to the neglected infant, but the public likewiſe, in ſome degree, ſuſtains a prejudice from it: it is an evil, that, as it were, ſtarves poſterity, and defrauds our country of thoſe perſons, who with due care, might make an eminent figure in their reſpective poſts of life: for if we will trouble ourſelves to look round with impartial eyes, we ſhall be convinced, that there are, indeed, but very few to whom nature has been ſo unkind, that they are not capable of ſhining in ſome ſcience or other. There is a certain byaſs towards knowledge in every mind, which may be ſtrengthened and improved by proper applications.

It

It muſt be then the great buſineſs and concern of parents to ſet the mind right, that on all occaſions it may be diſpoſed to conſent to nothing, but what may be ſuitable to the dignity and excellency of a rational creature. As the difference to be found in the manners and abilities of men, is owing more to their education than to any thing elſe, we have reaſon to conclude, that great care is to be had of the forming childrens minds, and giving them that ſeaſoning early, which ſhall influence their lives always after. For when they do well or ill, the praiſe or blame will be laid there; and when any thing is done aukwardly, the common ſaying will paſs upon them, that 'it is ſuitable to their breeding.'

This very aptly brings into my mind the ſtory of Lycurgus, the Lacedæmonian lawgiver, as related by Plutarch. 'He took two whelps of the ſame litter, 'and ordered them to be bred in a quite different 'manner; a while after he took an occaſion, in an 'aſſembly of the people, to diſcourſe of what great 'advantage the cuſtomary practice of wholeſome in'ſtructions and precepts was to the attainment of vir'tue: in the cloſe of his harangue he told them, that 'to inſinuate his arguments more powerfully, he 'would make an appeal to their ſenſes, and let them 'ſee a demonſtration of his words, by example: upon 'this, the two whelps were ordered to be brought 'into the hall, and there was ſet down to them a diſh 'of fragments and a live hare. One of the dogs 'immediately (as he had been bred) flies upon the 'hare, and the other as greedily runs to the frag'ments. While the people were muſing and racking 'their brains to find out the moral of this odd pro'ceeding: this, ſays Lycurgus, is purſuant to what I 'before told you; for ſee thoſe whelps do as they 'were bred; and though they are both of the ſame 'litter, yet the diverſity of breeding hath made the 'one a good hound, and the other a curr, good for 'nothing but to lick pots or diſhes.' The effects of nature and habit are the ſame in every ſpecies as in an

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human body. What horſe, well managed from a colt proves not eaſily governable by the rider? And are not the wildeſt and moſt ſavage beaſts made tame, and brought to hand by induſtry? Youth is the proper and only ſeaſon for erudition; and if it be neglected then, it will be too late, when maturity renders the mind too ſtubborn and inflexible.

Fingit equum tenerâ docilem cervice magiſter
Ire viam, quam monſtrat eques, &c.

Says Horace,

The jockey trains the young and tender horſe,
While yet ſoft-mouth'd he breeds him to the courſe:
The whelp, ſince when i'th' hall be learn'd to bark
At buck-ſkins ſtuff'd, now ranges o'er the park.
Now, now, whilſt young with virtuous rules begin;
Suck holy precepts now, and free from ſin.
What ſeaſon'd firſt the veſſel keeps the taſte.

CREECH.

The mind is to be made obedient to diſcipline, and pliant to reaſon, while it is yet tender, and eaſy to be bowed; but if we ſuffer ill principles to get ground on infancy, vice to debauch, or paſſion to pervert reaſon, in that unguarded age; when we have once made an ill child, it is a fooliſh expectation to promiſe ourſelves he ſhall prove a good man. Shall we wonder afterwards to taſte the waters bitter, when we ourſelves have firſt poiſoned the fountain?

If our young ones labour under any infirmity of body, nature knocks at our breaſt, and all the fears and affections of a parent are alarmed to remove their uneaſineſs; if their cheeks but flush, or pulſes beat high, we are immediately apprehenſive of ſome feveriſh diſpoſition; and ſhould we not have as watchful an eye on the torments and diſtempered ſallies of their ſouls? Shall we let pernicious habits take their courſe in youth, and flatter ourſelves, that as ſenſe ſtrengthens,

ens, and judgment grows ripe in them, they will correct in themſelves the faulty indulgences of their childiſh years, or at leaſt be better ſeaſoned by age for the precepts we can give them againſt folly or immorality? It is a ſuppoſition moſt erroneous in itſelf, and fatal in its conſequences; for he that is not uſed to ſubmit his will to the reaſon of others when he is young, will ſcarce hearken or ſubmit to his own reaſon, when he is of an age to make uſe of it: and what a kind of a man ſuch an one is like to prove, is eaſy to foreſee. But could we admit, that this happy change might be effected at approaching maturity, ſhall we dare to promiſe ourſelves life to that day, and that heaven will ſpare us purpoſely on earth for this procraſtinated reformation? I cannot forbear thinking we are ſubject to the imputatation wherewith, as Diogenes Laertius tells us, Empedocles charged the people of Agrigentum; *Ædificare, ut ſemper victuros; genio indulgere, ut poſtridie morituros:* 'that they indulged themſelves in eating, as if they were to die on the morrow; 'but built up their houſes as if they were to live to eternity:' ſo do we humour our children in luxury and intemperance, and make them ſharers in all our extravagances, as if an hereafter would be too late in thoſe points; but we rear up their ſouls and inclinations to virtue and good manners as ſlowly, as if it were ſtill too ſoon to begin the ſtructure. It would not be amiſs in this great duty of education, to liſten to the admonition of Pythagoras; δεῖ τεκνοποιεῖσθαι, δεῖ γὰρ ἀνίκα λιπεῖν τὰς θεραπευούσας τὸν Θεόν. 'It is 'your duty to endeavour at increaſe in your generation, 'becauſe you ought to leave behind you thoſe that may 'reverence and reſpect the Deity.' It is not a praiſe to increaſe our ſpecies in number alone, if we cannot make our workmanſhip of value: capacity, good ſenſe, and a thouſand commendable inherent qualities, may be interred in the boſom of the party that poſſeſſes them, and entirely loſt to the world, if the benefit of education, and proper knowledge, do not come in to their relief, draw them forth from obſcurity, and make

them as extenſively uſeful as nature firſt deſigned. For what man is not convinced he is an uſeleſs perſon, though he has ever ſo many good qualities, and ever ſuch extraordinary merit, when he conſiders at his death, he leaves a world which is not like to miſs him, and ſuch numbers to ſupply his place?

Since then ſo much depends upon education, great care ſhould be taken to form children to the principles of religion: the byaſs ſhould be ſet right at firſt, and the mind prepoſſeſs'd, as it were, for the intereſt of virtue. This is the way to ſmooth the paſſage to an happy life, to reconcile appetite to reaſon, and make the affections more manageable afterwards. For the motion is ſtrongly directed, and the bent taken from the firſt impreſſion: and cuſtom will make a good practice as eaſy as a bad one. For as in childhood the memory is ſtrong, and the body capable of application; ſo as yet the mind is not overcharged with cares, the power of intereſt is not grown up, and the baits of pleaſure being ſomewhat out of ſight, they are unſeized by the prevalence of habit, and the infection of ill company.

Vice, if we may believe the general complaint, ripens ſo faſt now-a-days, and runs up to ſeed ſo early in young people, that it is almoſt impoſſible to keep them from the ſpreading contagion, if we will venture them abroad in the herd, and truſt to chance or their own inclinations for the choice of their company. It is virtue which is the hard and valuable part to be aimed at in education; all other conſiderations and accompliſhments ſhould give way, and be poſtponed to this. It is the ſolid and ſubſtantial good we ſhould labour to implant and faſten in their ſouls, and never ceaſe till they have attained a true reliſh of it, and placed their ſtrength, their glory, and their pleaſure in it. 'All our acquiſitions, by labour or traffic; our 'lands, poſſeſſions, and every thing, are ſubſervient to 'virtue;' ſays Saluſt, in his poem to Catiline, *Quæ homines arant, navigant, ædificant, virtuti omnia parent. Sed multi mortales, dediti ventri, atque ſomno, indocti, incul-*

incultique, vitam ſicuti peregrinantes tranſiêre: quibus profectò contra naturam, corpus voluptati, anima oneri fuit. Eorum ego vitam mortemque juxta æſtimo: quoniam de utraque ſiletur. But there are a number of mortals, who being abſolutely reſigned to luxury and lazineſs, without learning or embelliſhments, ſpend their whole lives, like travellers in a foreign country, without being known or taken notice of. To ſuch men as theſe, contrary to the deſign and inſtitution of nature, their bodies have been all their pleaſure, but their ſouls a burthen and clog on them: I look on their lives and deaths to be much the ſame, as both are the objects of ſilence and obſcurity.

It is ſcarce to be doubted, I think, but the very ſpring and root of honeſty and virtue lie in the felicity of lighting on a good education: the beſtowing of which, to the beſt of their power and capacity, is as incumbent on parents, as the giving their children food and raiment. And can that man profeſs himſelf a father, and pretend to fondneſs and paternal affection, that only uſes his child as a play-thing, makes a farce of boyiſh converſation, brings him up to pomp of habit, nicety of diet, and a ſeries of new pleaſures, ſwells his little breaſt with pride, and expectations of what he is born to; yet neglects the important part of his kindneſs, a liberal education? Should we not accuſe an huſbandman of lazineſs or ignorance, that did not take care to prop up his feeble plants? Should we not reckon him a weak man, that kept a large ſum of money by him, without turning it to account or improvement? And yet too many fathers there are, that ſo love their money beyond the intereſt of their children, that, leſt it ſhould coſt them more than they are willing to ſpare, they rather rear them up in a cheap ignorance. How can ſuch men deſerve the name of fathers, who are more concerned to gratify themſelves or friends in trifles or ſenſuality, than to have their off-ſpring neceſſarily educated? Crates, the ancient philoſopher, was wont to ſay, 'That if he 'could univerſally be heard from an eminence, he would

'make this proclamation thence, What mean you 'fellow-citizens, that you thus turn every ſtone to ſcrape 'wealth together, and take ſo little care of your chil-'dren, to whom one day you muſt relinquiſh it all?' Thoſe parents do like him that is ſolicitous about his ſhoe, but neglects the foot that is to wear it. This indolence (not to give it a harſher title) in fathers, proceeds from that prevailing diſtemper of avarice, that makes them only conſider the preſent moneys they ſave by this frugal impiety, without having any diſtant views to the fatal conſequences reſulting from their ſparing, but unjuſtifiable conduct and œconomy. The firſt, but certain iſſue of this neglect of education, is, that the youth becomes the mark of public contempt and deriſion: the follies, he cannot by the bare force of unedified nature ſmother or correct, lay him open to the obſervations, and thence malicious detractions of company: all their wit and envy is employed to ſound his want of underſtanding; and when his weakneſs has betray'd him to the enemy, they moſt ungenerouſly inſult the wretch, and make him a tool to their pleaſure and raillery. Whoever certainly would with ſerioufneſs peruſe the ſatyrical character my lord Rocheſter has given of an unpoliſhed country 'ſquire, would firmly reſolve to make it his endeavour to protect his ſon from deſerving the laſh of ſuch ſatire.

——— ——— In Eaſter term,
My young maſter's worſhip comes to town;
From pedagogue and mother juſt ſet free,
The hopeful heir of a great family,
That with ſtrong beer and beef the country rules,
And ever ſince the conqueſt have been fools.
And ſtill with careful proſpect to maintain
That character, leſt croſſing of the grain
Should mend the booby breed, his friends provide
A couſin of his own to be his bride.
And thus ſet out
With an eſtate, no wit, and a young wife,
The ſolid comforts of a coxcomb's life,

Dunghil

Dunghil and peaſe forſook, he comes to town,
Turns ſpark, learns to be lewd, and is undone.

It may be made an obſervation of general proof, and a rule which admits of very few exceptions, that your raw undiſciplined youth is ever fond of aſſuming the character of a fine gentleman; but he pants after only the bravery and outſide of their compoſition; is affected with the charms and freedom of their mien, and apes it with an aukward, but diſſolute gallantry. From this acquired fop, he ſtudies to make himſelf a rake; thinks it is fine and faſhionable to frequent public places, where men of reſerved notions and principles decline being ſeen: is ambitious of ſeeming to know the town, be converſant with gallantries and extravagance; gleans the hiſtories of romantic intrigues from coffee-houſe converſation, and puts them upon the next company for his own. Yet though he talks with all the ſpecious information, he is this woman's cully, and the ſharper's bubble. If of a timorous and cowardly diſpoſition, perhaps, he is only impotent in vice, and a vain affecter of being thought wild: if he have the ſeeds of daring and reſolution in his ſoul, he ſteps boldly into enormities, and is only afraid of being counted ſober and preciſe; eſteems all religious duties, ſuperſtition, and prieſt-craft; a modeſt and virtuous behaviour ſtupid and ſimple; looks on morality as an unmanly tye on his temper; and that it is a diminution to him either to be careful of his own fame, or his creditors wants, Thus, through contempt of a ſound and orderly way of living, he precipitates himſelf into riotous and ſervile pleaſures. Then will thoſe parents dearly repent, when it is too late to amend it, and vex themſelves even to diſtraction for thoſe vicious courſes of their children, unto which their own neglect hath betrayed them. When they behold them ſquandering their ſubſtance in feaſting, ſhaking it off with rooks at the hazard-table, employing it to compound a drunken battery, or laviſhing it in the ſupport of a ſtrumpet's extravagance;

while

while by all theſe purſued amuſements of a depraved inclination, they are only purchaſing diſeaſes, riding poſt after poverty, and running themſelves both out of health and credit.

One might be much more prolix in enumerating the ill effects and miſcarriages that attend the want of a regular education; but let every man's imagination, from this ſhort view, widen the proſpect of his own thoughts; let him conſider, in the compaſs of his own acquaintance, who has been faulty in this regard, and then trace the known conſequence of that error. If not yet ſo, let him in fancy make himſelf a future father, look with deteſtation on an omiſſion that brands himſelf and his poſterity, and be aſhamed to train up an heir to his fortunes, whom the whole world will judge imperfect, and but half made. I look upon a wiſe father, like an artful painter; the begetting his child is only chalking out the groſs lines of his piece; educating him, is laying the colours, and the manner of that education, is the ſtrength and felicity of his lights and ſhades: by the boldneſs of the ſtrokes, and finiſhing beauties, every one will determine of the workman's ſkill and accuracy; by the want of ſtrength, or deviation of nature, they will as readily find out his ignorance or careleſſneſs: this image puts me in mind of a ſtory not unapplicable to theſe deficient and unperforming fathers. It is ſaid, 'A 'wretched painter, ſhewing Apelles a picture, told 'him withal, that he had taken a very little time to 'draw it. If thou hadſt not told me ſo, ſaid Apelles, 'I ſee cauſe enough to believe it was a haſty draught.' The manners, and deportment of our ſons will be ſtrong evidences of our negligence in cultivating them, and lay us open to the reproof of every judicious obſervator.

It is plain, therefore, that a good education, and regular inſtruction, are the beſt portions we can beſtow on our children, and ſuch only as can truly enrich them; and thoſe two afford great helps and aſſiſtances towards the attainment of virtue and felicity.

city. For all other good things are but human, and of ſmall value, ſuch as will hardly recompence the induſtry required to the getting of them. We all might deſire to be well deſcended; but it is of our anceſtor's goods, not our own: riches are valuable, but the goods of fortune, who frequently takes them from the poſſeſſors, and carries them to thoſe that never ſo much as hoped for them. Glory is a thing deſerving reſpect, but unſtable; beauty is a bleſſing, but of a ſhort continuance; health a precious enjoyment, but eaſily impaired; ſtrength a quality of deſire and ſervice, but apt to be the prey of diſeaſes and old age: but the inherent poſſeſſions of virtue and ſound principles, and thoſe noble qualifications of the mind which are treaſured there, by a juſt inſtitution and habitual practice, are not to be moleſted by fortune, decayed by time, or taken away by the tyranny of accidents.

It is education alone that can mend nature, and improve the talents of that great benefactreſs. Has ſhe given us a competent ſhare of ſenſe and reaſon? Education carries up our ſenſe to wiſdom, and our reaſon to judgment. It is the learned alchymiſt that purges away our droſs, and ſublimes our diſpoſitions: that reads us lectures of uſe upon every turning and winding of our actions; informs us in our general and particular duties; teaches us to worſhip heaven, to honour our parents, to reverence our elders, to ſubject ourſelves to the laws, to obey our governors, to love our friends, to cheriſh our wives, be affectionate to our children, and not inſolently injurious to our ſervants: it ſtrikes in with philoſophy in many leſſons; teaches us not to be over-joyed in proſperity, nor too much dejected in adverſity: not to be diſſolute in our pleaſures; nor in anger to be tranſported to a fury that is brutal.

But may it not be objected, that the refined education, which is capable of theſe advantages, is calculated but for one claſs of people: that I have accommodated my precepts to the rich alone, and neglected

lected to ſuit them to the children of the Plebeian? I hope my diſcourſe ſhall not be a ſufferer by this conſtruction; every one is to conſult his fortune and circumſtances, and with the direction of his country adage, "Cut his coat according to his cloth." If ſome through the narrowneſs of their eſtates, are diſabled from making the advantages they otherwiſe might, they have diſcharged their duty, in beſtowing on their children the beſt education that their abilities will reach: I have not limited my diſcourſe to any particular method of purſuing it; I have ſpoken as yet abſtractedly of the matter, with reference to the influences it has on the mind, and as it may be the road to lead children to virtue and goodneſs.

It is therefore in every parent's power, of what degree or circumſtances ſoever, by exhortations, and rational motives, to prepare the breaſt of his child for the reception of what is juſt and right; to reprehend or encourage him according to the variety of occaſions; to make his memory the ſtore-houſe of piety and good principles, to make him affable and courteous in diſcourſe and behaviour; to keep him from luxury; bridle his paſſions, and reſtrain his actions; to ſet examples before him fit for his imitation, and not debauch his conduct by patterns of licentiouſneſs; to accuſtom him to ſpeak the truth; and to account it, as indeed it is, a matter of religion ſo to do.

Theſe are points independent on affluence or ſtraightneſs of fortune; and wherein parents will aſſiſt themſelves from their own prudence, and propenſity to virtue: the caſe differs as to that other branch of education, the giving their children the knowledge of books, and of the liberal arts and ſciences; which I ſhall comprehend under the general title of Learning.

LEARNING.

THOUGH Cicero has aſſerted, that nature, without learning, has oftener been of prevalence to the attainment of praiſe and virtue, than acquired learning without the foundation of a natural capacity; yet he means it not as a doctrine that ſhould diſcourage our affection to letters. For however deeply that great man ſtood indebted to nature, his obligations were ſtill higher to books and knowledge; his faculty of pleading, and charms of Oratory, aroſe from his diligence and accuracy in ſtudy: he could contemn the light amuſements of a feſtival, or any other inviting pleaſures of his time, and taſte a ſolid and ſincere enjoyment in the peruſal of an author, that feaſted his ſenſes, and improved his mind.

I cannot conceive the man abſolutely compleat, whoſe natural endowments are not aſſiſted and cultivated by learning; we ought to have the ſame mixture in us on all occaſions, as Horace judges neceſſary to a poet for the compoſing of a perfect poem.

———*Ego nec ſtudium ſine divite venâ,*
Nec rude quid proſit, video, ingenium; alterius ſic
Altera poſcit opem res, & conjurat amicè.

——— To ſpeak my thought I hardly know
What witleſs art, or artleſs wit can do:
Each by itſelf is vain, I'm ſure; but joined,
Their force is ſtrong; each proves the others friend.

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There are millions of inſtances that evidence the force of induſtry and neceſſary application: I ſhall content myſelf with one compariſon, which is obvious to every man's thoughts, and which to me ſeems applicable to the purpoſe in hand. A man's ground may of itſelf be good; yet if it be unmanured, it will contract barrenneſs; and by how much the better it was naturally, by ſo much will it be rendered the worſe, if through careleſſneſs it be ill-huſbanded. On the other ſide, let a man's ground be more than ordinarily rough and rugged, yet experience tells us, that if it be well manured, it will quickly be made capable of anſwering his labour. Thus a good natural capacity may be impared by ſlothfulneſs and diſuſe; thus dull and heavy natural parts may be improved by inſtructions and induſtry. If nature be not improved by learning, it is mind; if learning be not aſſiſted by nature, it is maimed: and if exerciſe fail of the aſſiſtance of both, it is imperfect, as to the attainment of its end.

On my peruſal of Plato's Immortality of the Soul, I could not help being affected with one peculiar notion of Socrates, where he advances, "That the learning we acquire by pains and hard ſtudy, is but a remembrance and recollection of our ideas; that the knowledge of them all was implanted in us before we were born; and if we were not continually forgetting the knowledge of theſe impreſſions, there would be the ſame neceſſity for us always to know them, as to be born with them: for that the definition of knowing, is to retain and not loſe what we have learned; and the definition of forgetting, is the loſing that knowledge we before were poſſeſſed of." It could not certainly be amiſs, as to our improvement, if we could believe thoſe principles true; if we could perſwade ourſelves that nature had furniſhed us with univerſal knowledge, which through the weakneſs and inſolence of childhood we have forfeited and ſuffered to ſlide gradually from our memories: how carefully ſhould we

labour

labour to retrieve the knowledge of thoſe loſt ideas, and refurniſh our ſouls by diligence and ſtudy, with thoſe treaſures we firſt owed to the beneficence of nature?

However, without wandering after ſuch eccentric ſentiments, we need no ſtronger incentives to learning, than to know what figures we ſhall make in the world with this great accompliſhment. Let us but caſt our eyes abroad, and ſee how the gentleman is improved by the ſcholar: how by the labour of a few years of erudition, he ſtands poſſeſſed of advantages that will ſtick by him to his lateſt hour: what exalted notions he entertains from it of his Creator's omnipotence, and indulgence to man! What a wide ſcene of nature, and her operations, is opened to his view! What grounds it gives him of admiration and delight! How is his taſte of enjoyments refined! And how is he made capable of being charmed, and of charming in his turn, with communicated knowledge! Nobility, riches, ſtate and ſupremacy can procure us a cuſtomary reſpect, and make us the idols of an unthinking croud; but knowledge and learning alone recommend us to the love of thoſe in a ſuperior claſs, who admire more the merits of our underſtanding, than the advantages of our birth and fortune. Learning alone, of all things in our poſſeſſion, is immortal and divine: and two things there are that are moſt peculiar to human nature, underſtanding and reaſon; of which two, the underſtanding is the maſter of reaſon, and reaſon the ſervant of the underſtanding. Theſe are againſt all aſſaults of fortune impregnable; not to be taken away by falſe accuſation, or impaired by ſickneſs or enfeebled by old age. For the underſtanding only grows youthful by age; and time which decays all other things increaſeth knowledge in us in our decaying years. We may be plundered of our wealth, defrauded of our lands, and our books may become the prey of ſome malicious accident; but that chance which robs us of our library, cannot take from us the advantages we have reaped by

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our prior reſort to it: every man of reaſon and ſolidity, muſt be touched with the agreeable anſwer of Socrates, who, when Gorgias aſked him, "What his opinion 'was of the king of Perſia, and, whether he judged 'him happy,' replied, 'That he could not tell what 'to think of him, becauſe he knew not how well he 'was furniſhed with virtue and learning.' As judging human felicity to conſiſt in thoſe endowments, and not thoſe which are ſubject to fortune. In a word, learning is your companion and aſſiſtant in every age, place, and circumſtance; *Hæc ſtudia adoleſcentiam alunt, ſenectutem oblectant, ſecundas res ornant, adverſis perfugium ac ſolatium præbent: delectant domi, non impediunt foris: pernoctant nobiſcum, peregrinantur, ruſticantur,* ſays Cicero. Theſe ſtudies cheriſh our youth, and delight our age; are the ornaments of our proſperity, and refuge and comfort in adverſity; they pleaſe us when at home, and never impede our occaſions when abroad; they will watch the night with us, be our fellow-travellers in the road, and our amuſements in the country.

But to dwell no longer on the bare praiſe and recommendation of learning, I will endeavour to make my ſentiments of uſe, and explain how I would be underſtood when I adviſe this attainment: I ſhould ever heartily wiſh my ſon to be a ſcholar, never deſire to ſee him a pedant; be ſatisfied that he was thoroughly acquainted with his authors, but be diſguſted to find him eternally ſmell of them: garlic and onions are not half ſo nauſeous at ſecond hand, as to be rudely breathed upon by a retailer of fragments: the man looks monſtrous that ſtalks about like a walking library, and is for ſpouting his pagan quotations on every company: this is a vice and crudity of learning: it is plain there muſt be an indigeſtion of knowledge, when the party is ſo oppreſſed with its vapours. I love to ſee a man that has modeſty equal to his capacity; that does not covet to appear like an inquiſition on his neighbour's parts; that makes learning an embelliſhment, not an affecta-

fectation; and can be content to communicate his ideas of things, without aſſuming an air of ſuperiority over the perſon to whom he communicates.

The choice of the tutor or ſchoolmaſter is of great moment to the child's improvement: he ought to be a man that can read tempers, as well as books, and ſee as far into the bent of his pupil's inclinations, as his author's meaning: he ſhould know how to adapt the claſſics to the genius; and not impoſe Homer and Horace, where Demoſthenes or Cæſar's Commentaries would be more acceptable. We have from our infancy a particular taſte for a particular ſubject and argument: if our deſires are turned to poetry, Virgil and Ovid will ſtill have freſh charms; if our talents lie to eloquence and oratory, Cicero will make the ſtrongeſt impreſſions; or if our delight be confined to hiſtory, there are authors of purity that may feaſt our minds with that ſcience. This is what the tutor is to find and practiſe on the ſcholar: but above all, he muſt labour not to ſet his ſcholar's capacity on the rack; or put him on loſing his way in Livy, at an age when he is only fit to travel through Corderius or Æſop.

Nor do I think we are to waſte our youth at ſchool only to learn the conſtruction of Greek or Latin, or any other dead language: there is more requiſite than grammar and ſyntax, themes and diſtichs; *Tam vitæ quam ſcholæ diſcere neceſſe eſt*; we muſt learn things uſeful to our conduct, as well as to diſpute methodically. When we once underſtand our author's language, let us endeavour to be maſters of his ſpirit; enter into his genius, wit, deſigns, and diſpoſitions of them; enquire into the principles and morality he advances; and if good, make them ſtandards for our private imitation. Thus will learning be uſeful and wholeſome; our improvement riſe gradually, as our judgments ripen; our breaſts be furniſhed with rules and ideas noble and practicable, and remote from thoſe trifles which moſt ſuit the popular humour.

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We are not only to govern our appetites in the delights of eating and drinking, but alſo to enure them to a like temperance in reading; that while we make uſe of authors as food, we may purſue that which is wholeſome and profitable in thoſe things which we read with moſt pleaſure. For as a city cannot be ſecure, if but one gate be left open to receive the enemy, though all the reſt be ſhut; ſo neither can a youth be ſafe, though he be ſufficiently fortified againſt the aſſaults of all other pleaſures, whilſt he is without any guard againſt thoſe of the ear. And by how much the nearer the commerce is betwixt the delights of that ſenſe, and thoſe of the mind and reaſon; by ſo much the more, when he lies open on that ſide is he apt to be debauched and corrupted thereby.

I deſign this caution principally in the reading of the poets; for though poetry may afford ſweet and wholeſome nouriſhment to the minds of young men, yet it contains likewiſe no leſs matter of diſturbance and emotion to them that want a right conduct in the ſtudy thereof. The Epicureans were ſo particularly prejudiced againſt this ſcience, that as they looked on it not only as unprofitale, but hurtful, ſo it was one of their injunctions on their diſciples, Ποιήματα ἀγνωεῖν, ἐκ ἂν ποιεῖν, "neither to read nor make poems." Youth therefore here muſt keep a guard on itſelf, and be careful of being ſeduced to their hurt, by that which affords them ſo much delight. For as poetry many times deſcribes, by imitation, foul actions, unſeemly manners, and paſſions, the young ſtudent muſt not in ſuch deſcriptions (although performed never ſo artificially and commendably) believe all that is ſaid as true, or embrace it as good; but give it its due commendation only ſo far as it ſuits the ſubject treated of. For the goodneſs of things themſelves differs much from the goodneſs of the imitation of them: the goodneſs of the latter, conſiſting only in propriety and aptneſs to repreſent the former. Now the fiction and repreſentation of evil acts, when it withal acquaints us with the

the ſhame and damage befalling the doers, is ſo far from hurting, that it rather profits him that reads it: and boys may be inſtructed by reading the poets as they ought, to draw even from thoſe paſſages that are moſt ſuſpected for wicked and abſurd, ſomething that is uſeful and profitable; as the bee is taught by nature to gather the ſweeteſt honey from the harſheſt flowers and ſharpeſt thorns.

Mr. Locke in his excellent treatiſe of education, ſeems ſo averſe to the cheriſhing and improving of a poetic vein, that he is againſt boys making of verſes at ſchool. He thinks parents ſhould labour to have it ſtifled and ſuppreſſed as much as may be; and knows not what reaſon a father can have to wiſh his ſon a poet, who does not deſire to have him bid defiance to all other callings and buſineſs. I cannot apprehend the real danger he intimates from verſification. Shall a youth, becauſe he finds ſome charms in writing an epigram, or trying at an elegy, inſtantly ſhake hands with all thoughts and deſigns of gravity and moment; *Poeta naſcitur non fit*, is a maxim which will always, in my opinion, take off the edge of this argument: if nature have not ſtrongly turned a youth's genius that way, if he be not born with the ſeeds of poetry in his breaſt, he may with ſecurity read all their works, and try his fancy at every diſtinct ſpecies of verſe; yet not be injured, as to the meaſures he is to take in life, either from his parents preſcriptions, or his own inclinations.

This great man ſeems likewiſe to be of opinion, that Latin and language are the leaſt part of a child's education. I think infancy can never be over-burdened with too many languages, and that the utmoſt care ſhould be taken to teach them to children. There is no condition of life in which theſe are not uſeful to them, and lead them equally to the depths of learning, or the eaſier and more agreeable parts of knowledge. If this kind of ſtudy, ſo paiuful and ſo laborious, is put off 'till men are ſomewhat older, and come

come to that age, ſtiled by the name of youth, either they cannot make it the object of their choice, or if they do, they find it impoſſible to perſevere in it. 'Tis to conſume that time in the queſt of languages, which is ſet apart for the uſe which ought to be made of them; 'tis confining to the knowledge of words, an age which wants already to go further, and ſeek for things; 'tis, at the beſt, loſing the fineſt and moſt valuable years of one's life.

So great and ſo neceſſary a foundation can never rightly be laid, unleſs it be when the ſoul naturally receives every thing, and is capable of deep impreſſions; when the memory is freſh, quick, and fit for ſtudy; when the mind and heart are void of paſſions, cares, and deſires; and when thoſe who have a right to diſpoſe of us, deſign us for long and painful labours. I am perſuaded, the ſmall number of true ſcholars, and great number of ſuperficial ones, come from the neglect of this practice.

Languages are no more than the keys of ſciences; yet he who deſpiſes one ſlights the other: and there is a ſort of courage needful to ſupport ſome tempers againſt the ſcandal of learning: they have entertained an eſtabliſhed opinion againſt learned men; they won't allow them to know the world, how to live, nor to have any genius for ſociety; and ſo ſend them back ſtripped to their cloſet and their books. As ignorance is an eaſy ſtate, which coſts but little pains, moſt of the world follow it, and form ſuch a numerous party in court, city, and country, that the learned cannot bear up againſt them. With many people learned and pedantry are ſynonymous: nay, often when the rich man ſpeaks, and ſpeaks of learning, the learned man muſt be ſilent, liſten and applaud, at leaſt, if he would not paſs only for learned.

I grant that to take meaſures wholly from books, without looking into men and buſineſs, is like travelling in a map, where, though countries and cities are well enough diſtinguiſhed, yet villages and private ſeats are

are either overlooked, or too generally marked for a ſtranger to find. To be conſtantly in the wheel, has neither pleaſure nor improvement in it. A man may as well expect to grow ſtronger by always eating, as wiſer by always reading. Too much overcharges nature, and turns more into diſeaſe than nouriſhment. But books well managed, afford direction and diſcovery: they ſtrengthen the organs, enlarge the proſpect, and give a more univerſal inſight into things, that can be learned from unlettered obſervation. If they are well choſen, they neither dull the appetite, nor ſtrain the capacity, but refreſh the inclinations, ſtrengthen the power, and improve under experiment: they entertain and perfect at the ſame time, and convey wiſdom and knowledge through pleaſure.

I am not to learn, That the poliſhing of our underſtandings, whilſt we neglect our manners, as of all things the moſt inexcuſable: it may be too frequently ſeen, perhaps, that a wiſe man is not always a good one, and that the moſt polite ages are the leaſt virtuous. But this may be attributed to the folly of admitting wit and learning as merit in themſelves, without conſidering the application of them. 'The 'deſign of Learning (ſays an applauded author) is 'either to render a man an agreeable companion to 'himſelf, and teach him to ſupport ſolitude with 'pleaſure; or, if he is not born to an eſtate, to ſup-'ply that defect, and furniſh him with the means of 'getting one. For learning, whether ſpeculative or 'practical, is, in popular or mixed governments, the 'natural ſource of wealth and honour.'

There are a ſet of men in the world who make it their buſineſs to undervalue and depreciate every thing: theſe will not want ſentences to the prejudice of learning: they cry, with a contemptuous and magiſterial air, That 'it uſually does but improve what 'nature endowed us with: That he who wants good 'ſenſe, is unhappy in having it; for he has thereby 'only more ways of expoſing himſelf:' and that 'he

'who has ſenſe, knows that learning is not know-'ledge; but rather the art of uſing it.'

I have one thing to obſerve before I cloſe this head; which is, That however great and ſerviceable a qualification learning is, it is not of equal ſervice or importance to every diſtinct degree of men. It is ſcandalous for a gentleman of birth or fortune to know no more than he owes to the mere light of nature, the information of company, or family converſation. But the want of letters and politer knowledge is a very excuſable defect in him, who, after he is once gone from ſchool, is never to have more to do with it as long as he lives. Can there be any thing more ridiculous, than that a father ſhould waſte his money and ſon's time, in ſetting him to learn the Roman language, when at the ſame time he deſigns him for a trade, wherein he, having no uſe of Latin, fails not to forget that little which he brought from ſchool, and which, 'tis ten to one, he abhors, for the ill uſage it procured him? Could it be believed, unleſs we had every-where amongſt us examples of it, that a child ſhould be forced to learn the rudiments of a language, which he is never to uſe in the courſe of his life he is deſigned to; and neglect all the while the Writing a good hand, and Caſting Accompts, which are of great advantage in all conditions of life, and to moſt trades indiſpenſable neceſſary:

If I can give my ſon a fortune ſufficient to keep him above the aſſiſtance of a trade and employment to help out his ſubſiſtence; if he have enough to make a figure, and be independent on the world; let his learning and accompliſhments be as univerſal as ſchools and academies can furniſh him withal; but if Providence have placed him in a lower ſphere, if he muſt toil and ſtruggle through the world for a livelihood, the claſſic learning will not be the beſt ſtep to his advancement: there are attainments of a meaner nature will ſerve him moſt, ſuch as will turn him beſt for buſineſs, and are requiſite for a man of trade or commerce.

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I cannot ſhut up this article, without a gentle reproof to thoſe who have been ſuch ſhallow proficients from a liberal education, that they have only a ſickly affectation of being thought learned: theſe unedified ſtudents will tell you, 'that books are more inſtructive than travelling; and give you to underſtand, that "they are maſters of a tolerable library." If you are at the trouble of inſpecting it, perhaps, you may find the collection large, not of choice and ſelect authors; Number and quality in their recommendation; and if they are gilt and lettered, well bound, and of the beſt editions, no matter what the oglio conſiſts of; for the poſſeſſors ſeldom put them out of their ranks, or care to enter their boaſted library, but out of a vanity and ambition of ſhewing it.

Others there are, who, by an intemperate deſire of knowledge, and unwillingneſs to be ignorant of any thing, are greedy of all ſorts of learning, and maſters of none; fonder of knowing much, than knowing well: and had rather be ſuperficial ſmatterers in ſeveral ſciences, than to dive profoundly into a ſingle one: they every-where meet with maſters to reclaim them; are bubbles to their own vain curioſity; and often, by very painful efforts, can but juſt extricate themſelves from the greater ignorance.

Others again have the key of the ſciences, but never enter themſelves; they ſpend their lives in learning remote and uſeleſs languages. The moſt trifling idioms, the moſt ridiculous and magical characters employ their minds, and excite their induſtry; they pity thoſe who content themſelves with their own language, or at moſt with Greek and Latin. Theſe men read all hiſtorians, and know nothing of hiſtory; run through all books, but are not the wiſer for any; their defect is a barren ignorance of things and principles: but their beſt collection, their greateſt riches, conſiſt in abundance of words and phraſes, which they huddle together, and load their memory withal, while their underſtandings are empty and uninformed.

In fine, nothing has done learning more diſſervice among the ſenſible part of mankind, than that indiſcreet value which men of letters oftentimes put upon the moſt trifling parts of knowledge; that μικροφιλοτιμία in the way of ſcholarſhip, of which Theophraſtus has given us a character, as it relates to human life and affairs. 'Tis this that has brought ſo ill a report upon critics, and criticiſm, and ſunk extremely the value of that ſort of knowledge, which has been of ſuch excellent uſe to the world, when wiſely employed.

DRESS.

DRESS.

NO ſooner are our young gentlemen diſengaged from the confinement of ſchools and univerſities, but they deſire to appear independent in the world, to have their conduct and allowance in their own hand, and to make a figure from their own actions and appearance: there is now a new formation of the man begun, to which the taylor, milliner, perukemaker, and hoſier, are all to contribute in their ſeveral occupations. There is a council held on every individual part of the body's furniture, and the grand buſineſs of life ſeems to conſiſt in knowledge of faſhion and propriety of dreſs.

All gentlemen of fortune, at leaſt the young and middle-aged, are apt to pride themſelves a little too much upon their dreſs; and conſequently to value others in ſome meaſure upon the ſame conſideration: for it is grown, as the Guardian happily obſerves, of univerſal uſe in the conduct of life: civilities and reſpect are only paid to appearance. 'Tis a varniſh that gives a luſtre to every action; a *paſſe par-tout* that introduces us into all polite aſſemblies; and the only certain method of making moſt of the youth of our nation conſpicuous.

Nor is this extravagance of foppery confined alone to what we might call our diurnal habit; nor can we be barely content to flouriſh in a laced coat and a full-bottomed perriwig; but we muſt be equally modiſh and tawdry in that undreſs, we refinedly ſtile a *Deſhabilé*. We have too many of your empty Virtuoſo's, that are ambitious of glittering in this ſtate of negli-

gence, and ſeem to take a gay cap and ſlippers, with a ſcarf and party-colour'd gown, to be the enſigns of dignity and diſtinction.

The advice to the ladies in the regulation of dreſs, is proper and applicable to our ſex, and the reflection drawn from the primitive deſigns of habit, as much a ſubject for our meditation. We ſhould conſider that cloaths were not the effect of pride, but of ſin; and that inſtead of making us vain they ſhould ſerve to humble and mortify us, as having loſt that innocence which was a much greater ornament to us than the moſt glorious apparel can be; ſince ſhame was the original of cloathing, it ought to be modeſt; and all faſhions which are not ſo, are ſinful, arguing the wantonneſs of the wearer, and provoking that of the ſpectator; both which carry ſin in them.

There is not a more contemptible animal in nature, than a man of meer outſide: I at once abhor, and am aſhamed of the creature, that can look on the faſhionable head of a cane, or hinge of a ſnuff-box, to be accompliſhment; that values himſelf only on exterior ornaments; and thinks conduct conſiſts in the regulation of a grimace, a practiſed ſmile, or a ſtudied bow.

There are a ſet of ſuch intolerable fops in the world, that ſeeing but a new faſhioned ſhoe, will look upon their own, and bluſh, and can no longer believe themſelves dreſſed: that come to church, only to ſhew themſelves: are proud of a ſoft hand, which they preſerve ſo by a ſcented paſte; laugh with or without reaſon, becauſe either way they ſhew the whiteneſs of their teeth: they ſtudy an engaging turn of the head, and a ſort of ſweetneſs and languiſhing in the eyes, which they never forget to make uſe of, as graces to ſet themſelves off: their very gaits are contrived, and artificial, and every ſtep they take borrowed from a minuet: 'tis true, they wear breeches and a hat, and have ſome aukward pretence to humanity; but they are ſo ſtrongly offenſive to good ſenſe and

and reaſon, that I had rather ſee an honeſt hodman-dod, with his girdle of raw guts about him.

It may perhaps be replied, in vindication of dreſs and faſhion, That a man is governed principally by his ſenſes, and lively ſtruck by the objects which appear to him in an agreeable manner, cloaths contribute to make us agreeable objects, and we owe it to ourſelves to labour to appear ſuch. Every day's experience ſhews us, among variety of people with whom we are not acquainted, that we take impreſſions too favourable and too diſadvantageous of men at firſt ſight from their Habit. I think there is a conduct and medium to be obſerved in Dreſs, as much as any thing. A youth in the poſſeſſion of an ample fortune, cannot recommend his underſtanding to thoſe who are not of his acquaintance more ſuddenly, than by ſobriety in his habit: as this is winning at firſt ſight, ſo a perſon gorgeouſly fine, gives as immediate offence.

Eſt modus in rebus ſunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra, citraque nequit conſiſtere rectum.

Says Horace,

'There is a mean in all things, certain rules,
'Which to tranſgreſs confirms us knaves or fools.

I would not have my ſon practiſe ruſticity in his apparel, or be careleſs therein to a pitch of naſtineſs: let him be cautious of either extreme: there is a wide interval between the ſloven and the fop; and ſometimes as much pride taken, and affectation uſed of being unlike the reſt of the world in dreſs, as equipping the accompliſhed beau.

I would be underſtood, that I mean it is a fooliſh thing, and which very much betrays our weakneſs, to ſurrender ourſelves wholly to reigning cuſtoms, and be ſlaves to faſhion, either in diet or habit, in heal h or in conſcience: to have an affection, not for thoſe things which are beſt, but for thoſe which are moſt

ſought after, and in vogue. A man of mode cannot be long ſo: for faſhions are very tranſitory: one has hardly deſtroyed another, but it is juſtled out by a newer, which muſt itſelf make way for its ſucceſſor, and which will not be the laſt; ſuch is our levity. During theſe revolutions an age is ſpun out, and then all theſe favourable embelliſhments are ranked among things paſt, and dead to imitation.

A gentleman's mien and behaviour are ſufficient to diſcover him, without any great dependence upon ſhops and taylors. After all, the beſt way of diſtinguiſhing, is by the qualities of the mind. Let perſons of condition ſtrive rather to be richer in their diſpoſition than the vulgar: let them put on a better humour, wear a finer underſtanding, and ſhew a more ſhining fortitude. Let them appear remarkably juſt, inoffenſive and obliging. This is the way to be nobly popular, and gives them the hearts, as well as the ceremony of their inferiors.

Is the largeneſs of our circumſtances to be taken as an excuſe for prodigality in habit? Becauſe we abound in money and vanity, have we therefore the liberty of being as expenſive and modiſh as we pleaſe? No, if our fortunes ſwell to an exceſs, let the ſurpluſage of our wealth rather be employed in clothing the poor: let our ſuperfluities ſupply their want of neceſſaries; and ſuch a generous uſe of fortune will give luſtre to our reputations, and make the world look with wonder and regard upon us.

With what advantage ſhall we convey our memoirs to poſterity, by making our ſubſtance beneficial to our country, and laying out our abilities in the ſervice of religion, in promoting arts or knowledge, in eaſing the diſtreſs of ſuffering merit, and ſetting it free from the tyranny of debts, and inſupportable oppreſſion of a ſtarving circumſtance? 'Tis to be hoped we have, and always ſhall have ſhining examples of charity; ſome that think themſelves heaven's ſtewards in the application of their eſtates, and employ the intruſted talents in doing offices of good: theſe men can con-

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temn the falſe glare of a wardrobe; and know that fine cloaths ſignify nothing in the value of a man, becauſe they are but ſigns of wealth at beſt; and as cloaths don't ſuppoſe a man conſiderable, ſo neither can they make him ſo: ſuch men as theſe rather deſpiſe this kind of finery; they are above ſtooping to the vulgar notion of things, and ſcorn to eſtabliſh their reputation by counterfeit ſigns of worth.

I believe I may dare pronounce it a general maxim, that the greateſt pride and affectation in apparel, are lodged with perſons of the moſt ſubſtantial ignorance. The ſouls of idiots are actuated merely by frail ſenſe; their eyes are made their principal directors, and draw them into every pleaſing gaiety that ſtrikes their fancy through that ſenſe: diverſity of colour has there a powerful charm; beauty and elegance conſiſt in the dear variety, and worth and diſtinction are the conſequences of their finery. Theſe fools in trappings are enough to make men of gravity and ſound reaſon ſick of rich habits; and ſuch a proſtitution of dreſs muſt make it nauſeous to the wiſe. We ſhould be cautious of imitating the extravagancies of a blockhead in many reſpects; and ſhall we ſet a guard on our actions only, yet at the ſame time put on the colours of foolery? It is ſinking beneath our proper level, going out of the character we would in other things ſupport, and diſgracing the dignity of our nature by admiring trifles.

I could wiſh our country, like many parts abroad, obliged its ſubjects to a diſtinction of degrees in habits; that we had ſumptuary laws to confine the condition of perſons, and aſſerting the heraldry of their dreſs, as well as precedency in birth and quality: then ſhould our nobility be diſtinguiſhed from our gentry; our gentry from traders and mechanics; and every claſs and order of men reſtrained from an illegal aſpiring into a forbidden ſtation. How many tricks have been carried on, fortunes ſtole, and frauds committed, by a worthleſs inferior's putting on an air of quality, aſſuming a figure he had no pretence to, and

deceiving the credulity of unſuſpecting ſtrangers, that have taken his appearance of grandeur for real, and conſented to their own impoſitions, from the ſuperficial luſtre of a diſguiſed varlet?

There is one important conſideration, which makes me with ſome ardour deſire ſuch a reſtriction; which is, That the credit and fortune of an induſtrious tradeſman too often ſink in the ſupporting the extravagance of thoſe, whom vanity prompts to provide ſuch apparel, as the ſtate of their purſe and condition have no pretence to. How many are there that profeſs gentry in the world, and are proud of the boaſted worth of their families, yet have neither honour nor conſcience enough to diſcharge theſe perſonal engagements, but protract payment to an unreaſonable date, and perhaps force their creditor to the trouble of a proſecution? 'Tis an ignominious piece of injuſtice in us to ſtand indebted for the finery we have worn threadbare, and calls our reaſon as well as honour in queſtion. Let us make the caſe our own, and we ſhall condemn the practice with the utmoſt freedom and impartiality: if a reputed friend preſume ſo far on his intereſt in my affection, as to borrow my habit, and having borrowed, neglect to return it: Shall I not count him diſhoneſt and ungenerous? And ſhall I, on the ſtrength of my figure and circumſtances, prevail on a tradeſman to furniſh me on truſt with what I mean to be careleſs in paying for? And ſhall not he have as vile a ſuſpicion of my integrity? Believe me, theſe intentional delays are real frauds; and however they appear in the eye of the law, in fact they are but more licenſed robberies. We may ſin this way with greater indemnity; but the eſcape of puniſhment takes not off from the blackneſs of our crime: all but ſuch as are accuſtomed to the ſame fault, will deſpiſe our morals for it, and be apt to believe, that it is not bare conſcience which reſtrains us from enormities, which would make us liable to a judicial correction.

It ſeems to me plain, that a diſtinguiſhing bravery of habit is only proper to mark out the patrician, or add

add exterior authority to those who are possessed of public charges in a government. For as people generally take their measures more from the appearance, than reason of things, their apprehensions are so disposed, that they think nothing great but what is pompous, and glitters upon the senses: and if their governors had not some advantage of them in figure, they would be apt to overlook their character, and forget their distance. Here is only an innocent stratagem, to deceive the vulgar into duty, and to awe them into a just sense of obedience.

But granting this furniture of the body may be somewhat of guard to authority, yet no public person has any reason to value himself upon it: for the design of this sort of state is only to comply with the weakness of the multitude. He should rather be sorry that his authority needs the support of so little an artifice, and depends in any measure upon the use of such trifles. Nor in reality are we to imagine the magistrate cannot support his office without fine cloaths: for if he be furnished with general prudence, with abilities particular to his business, and has a competent share of power, he needs not doubt his influence over the people.

It may be likewise urged, with respect to quality, that without the additional distinction of dress, it may be sufficiently maintained by title, arms, and precedency: and that there is no necessity for persons, without jurisdiction, to march always with colours displayed, or make a needless ostentation of their wealth and grandeur: for admitting that persons of quality have some little colour for their vanity, yet singularity seems to have always a spice of arrogance in it.

Besides, if we will weigh the matter justly, for persons of condition to expect an extraordinary observance upon the account of fine cloaths, argues them conscious of their own little worth, and seems to imply, that the greatest part of their quality comes out of the dressing-room: that having nothing to prefer them to the esteem of the judicious, they are contented to

take up with the ceremony of the ignorant, and with a little glitter and pageantry draw the gazing unthinking *mobile* to admire them.

Upon the whole matter, the appearing pompous in equipage or habit, is but a vain-glorious publiſhing our own grandeur; a ſilent triumphing over the inferiority of others, and is in effect to proclaim ourſelves extraordinary people. Should we not ſneer, and think it odd in a ſoldier, to give a hiſtory of his valour and conduct in converſation? Or for a man of learning to make harangues upon his own parts and performances, and tell the company how ignorant they are in reſpect of him? And yet we can ſubmit to let our vanity boaſt itſelf in glaring colours, and the richneſs of our outſide ſpeak the real or pretended exceſs of our circumſtances, without thinking ourſelves accuſable to the world of pride, or a nauſeous oſtentation.

There is one thing, more than the odium of vanity, which makes this over-curious regard to the drapery worthy to be cenſured: That when the governing paſſion in a man lies this way, it too generally poiſons his diſpoſition to good offices: his charity is diſabled, his good nature fails, juſtice is overlooked, and he is loſt to all the noble purpoſes of life: hence are relations neglected, tradeſmen unpaid, and ſervants ſtinted to mortifying allowances, for the ſupport of this vanity. To ſee theſe inſignificant ornaments valued at ſo great a rate, and preferred to the neceſſaries of life, and regards of virtue, is no ſmall diſparagement to the underſtandings of men.

But the general and prevailing mode of the times may be admitted as a plea of no ſmall weight in defence of dreſs: for that it is as great a weakneſs to be out of faſhion, as to affect to be in it: the world are for ornament, and we give it them; are covetous of ſuperfluity, and we ſhew it; ſome value others for their fine linen, or rich ſilks: nay, and there are ſome places where a broader or narrower lace on our cloaths, will gain or loſe a man admittance. But after all, however general this cuſtom is, it is at beſt but

a ſpreading contagion, and epidemical foolery of the age; and we ought in prudence no more labour to humour it, than we would a ſurfeit; for let it prevail never ſo much amongſt the weaker claſs, the more polite and reaſonable ſpirits will always diſtinguiſh betwixt merit and mere faſhion.

To define the matter rightly, a faſhionable man, is like a certain blue flower, which grows ſpontaneouſly in plowed grounds; it choaks the corn, ſpoils the crop, and takes up the room of ſomething better; it has no beauty nor value, but what is owing to whim; born and dead in the ſame inſtant: to-day it is in vogue, and the ladies deck themſelves with it; to-morrow it is neglected, and left to the vulgar. But a man of merit, on the contrary, is a flower which we do not deſcribe by its colour, but which we call by its name, which we cultivate for its ſcent or beauty: one of the graces of nature, one of the things which beautify the creation; admired by all men in all ages; which our fathers valued, and we after them have as great a value for.

In ſhort, thoſe that are deſirous to ſet up for fops and coxcombs, ſhould be ſingular in their habit: thoſe that would avoid this imputation, ſhould be modeſt in their dreſs; and men of merit deſire nothing more. For a handſome woman, the more natural ſhe is, ſo the more beautiful; as ſhe loſes nothing by being careleſs, without any other ornament than what ſhe draws from her beauty and youth; as an innocent grace that ſhines in her face, animates every little action ſo much, that there would be leſs danger to ſee her adorned with all the advantages of dreſs and faſhion: in like manner an honeſt man is reſpected independent from all that outward ſhew, by which he would endeavour to make his perſon more grave, or venerable, and his virtue more ſpecious. A ſtarched behaviour, affected modeſty, a ſingularity in habit, add nothing to probity, nor heighten merit; but rather hurt, and often make it look leſs pure, and more ſuſpected.

So

So ſhort and tranſitory as life is, ſo many duties as we have to run through to fit us for futurity, ſhould be conſiderations to make us think of more than laying out our time on dreſs and faſhion: for what will become of theſe faſhions when time itſelf ſhall diſappear; virtue alone, though leaſt in faſhion, will be able to ſurvive time.

It falls out with many people in this caſe of dreſs, as it does in other gallantries: they fancy themſelves diſpenſed with on account of their age and fortune from being diſcreet or regular: they borrow from court the worſt part of the court; and appropriate to themſelves vanity, luxury, intemperance, and libertiniſm, as if all thoſe vices belonged to them: thus affecting a character far diſtant from what they ought to maintain, they become, according to their wiſhes, true copies of moſt wicked originals. They ſtep in like manner out of all decorum in point of habit; and 'tis an obſervation that ordinary people, when they happen to abound in money and vanity, have their houſes and perſons as richly furniſhed, as thoſe who are much their ſuperiors in quality.

But how great is the madneſs of ſome private men, who, being poſſeſſed of large eſtates, which their fathers got for them by trade and induſtry, form their wardrobe and equipage from the manner of the nobility; and by exceſſive expence, and ridiculous ſtatelineſs, provoke the laughter of the whole town; which they a-while fancy is dazzled with their luſtre, till they ruin themſelves in the end with labouring to make themſelves ridiculous! The fooliſhneſs of ſome pretenders in the city, in their wretched imitation of court accompliſhments, is more offenſive than the ill breeding of ordinary men, and the ruſticity of villagers.

Indeed, the moſt improper things we commit in the conduct of our lives, we are led into by the force of faſhion; and a prevailing cuſtom too often makes us act againſt the rules of nature, law, and common ſenſe. The general affectation among men, of appearing greater than they are, makes the whole world

run

run into the habit of the court; nor does the humour prevail only on thoſe whoſe fortunes can ſupport any change in their equipage, nor on thoſe only whoſe incomes demand the wantonneſs of new appearances, but on thoſe alſo whoſe circumſtances, in reality, would ſcarcely reach to clothe them with decency. A ſimplicity of outward appearance, is the ornamental habit of thoſe who deſire to be taken notice of for more than their dreſs. Indeed, the man who is ſingle and free in the world, if he has ſome ſhare of ſenſe, may live and make a figure above his fortune or quality: but this is not ſo eaſily done, if he is confined; for marriage ſeems to range every body in their proper rank and degree.

But when I am admitting a ſingle man to make this figure in life, I cannot allow him to throw away too much money or inclination upon curioſity in habit; for at this rate of management, a man loſes his wealth and reputation at the ſame time, makes himſelf expenſively ridiculous, and overſhoots extravagance itſelf. It is equally faulty in a man to launch out into over-large expences in any other ſubjects of vanity, for one of a middle ſtation and moderate fortune to value himſelf on a ſplendid table, to affect pomp and finery in the furniture of his houſe or lodgings, to be only pleaſed with recreations fit for his ſuperiors, or aim at the pride of keeping too many attendants.

A very rich man, ſays monſieur Bruyere, may eat his dainties, paint his cieling and alcoves, regale himſelf at his palace in the country and keep another in town, marry his daughter to a duke, and buy a title for his ſon: this is juſt, and within his compaſs; but it belongs perhaps to other men to live content. What is ſplendor, ſumptuouſneſs, and magnificence in people of quality, is extravagance, folly, and impertinence in private men. A Cleopatra may drink down a pearl worth a province, and not find the miſs of it; though reaſon, morality, and religion, ſhall condemn the luxury: but ſhall mere Plebeians, only becauſe they are rich,

rich, have the impudence to ſwallow at a ſingle morſel the nouriſhment of an hundred families?

All the atonement which men can make for wanton expences, which is a ſort of inſulting the ſcarcity under which others labour, is, that the ſuperfluities of the wealthy give ſupplies to the neceſſities of the poor: for what a prodigious number of people do our vanities maintain? And what a circulation of money do they occaſion? 'Providence in this caſe, (ſays the 'SPECTATOR,) makes uſe of the folly which we will 'not give up, and it becomes inſtrumental to the ſup-'port of thoſe who are willing to labour.' But this I am ſure, cannot fairly be alledged as an excuſe for prodigality in habit: no commiſeration of the wants of our fellow-creatures makes us exceed in this reſpect; our thoughts have entirely another turn, and we are feeding our own pride, and laying baits for the reſpect of others.

It would ſurely be no ſmall curb on our vanity, and ſerve to regulate our expences this way, if we ſhould look back on the frugality of the ancients. Every thing they did agreed with their circumſtances; their expences were proportioned to their income; livery, houſhold goods, equipages, tables, city and country-houſes, were all meaſured by their revenues and conditions: they had leſs than we have, and had enough; richer by their oeconomy and modeſty, than their revenues or demeſnes. They never knew how to deprive themſelves of neceſſaries to get ſuperfluities, nor to prefer ſhew to ſubſtance. Nay, let us but have regard to our own anceſtors, two or three generations back, and we ſhall find them as frugal; they were ſtrangers to the formality of wax illuminations; negligent of the ſplendor of appearing in their coaches; and were of the opinion, that men had legs given to walk on, and they uſed them. They did not ſuppoſe they ſhould be eſteemed a whit the more for being maſters of a glittering chariot, a numerous retinue, and ſix horſes to draw them in ſtate. Indeed at this time of day, a man is in ſome meaſure to be forgiven,

who

who fancies himſelf the greater wit, and the more nobly deſcended, becauſe of his rich coaches, fine cloaths, and ſplendid equipage; it is but the ſame opinion which he reads in the faces and eyes of thoſe who addreſs him.

Every man of ſenſe that ſees another making a ſhew with trimmings and embroidery, may perhaps tacitly admire the fancy of the taylor, but will be ſure to deſpiſe the oſtentation of the owner: we have an elegant and accurate deſcription of theſe profeſſed fops in a very happy writer, whoſe words I believe the reader will no more grudge to peruſe, than I do to tranſcribe. 'Aſk him what a clock 'tis (ſays he) and he pulls out 'a watch, which for the workmanſhip is a maſter-'piece; the handle of his ſword is an onyx; and he 'wears on his finger ſo large and bright a diamond, 'that it dazzles your eyes to look on it: he wants 'none of all thoſe curious toys, which are worn more 'out of oſtentation than ſervice: and is as prodigal in 'his dreſs, as a young fellow who has married a rich 'widow. Well, at laſt, you have given me the cu-'rioſity to ſee at leaſt all his finery; but ſend me hither 'thoſe cloaths and jewels of his, and I'll excuſe you 'his perſon.'

To draw towards ſome concluſion on this head, let me recommend the opinion of ſo wiſe a man as Cicero, in reſpect to external ornaments. *Adhibenda eſt præterea munditia, non odioſa, neque exquiſita nimis; tantumque fugiunt agreſtem et inhumanam negligentiam. Eadem ratio eſt habenda veſtitûs in quo ſicut in pleriſque rebus, mediocritas optima eſt.* 'We muſt have a regard 'to cleanlineſs; which we are not to run into too ex-'quiſite and offenſive nicety, but only ſo far as to 'avoid ruſticity, and a negligence below the dignity 'of our nature. We are to take the ſame meaſures 'as to our apparel, in which, as in moſt other things, 'a due mean is commendable.

This due mean muſt terminate in ſuch a regulation of our cloaths, that they may neither by their finery, declare that we ſet too high a value on ourſelves, nor by

by their negligence and naſtineſs, look as if we would have the world eſteem us brutes. 'Slovenlineſs, ſays 'Theophraſtus, is a lazy and beaſtly negligence of a 'man's own perſon, whereby he becomes ſo ſordid, 'as to be offenſive to thoſe about him.' It is a quality very various in its kind, as well as degrees; ſometimes confined to habit in general, ſometimes incident to men moſt accompliſhed in dreſs. There are ſome the moſt coſtly and accurate in the furniture of their bodies, yet diſgrace that nicety with an unſufferable dirtineſs of their ſkins, or letting their nails grow to the length of eagles talons. There are others who will neither bear a ſpot on their cloaths, nor the leaſt ſoil on their fleſh, yet are ſo coarſe and negligent in their diet, that they will without ſcruple fall to a diſh, which a porter would be diſguſted at. And there are ſtill another tribe of animals, who are careleſs and unpoliſhed in their own perſons, yet are afraid of being polluted by the dirt of their neighbours.

We likewiſe meet with thoſe in converſation, who delight and pride themſelves in being ſlaves: a ſet of men, who, without being ſubjected to it by the unkindneſs of their fortunes, are contented to draw upon themſelves the ridicule of the world in this particular. But whether this affectation be always owing to mere habitual naſtineſs, or whether avarice has not a great influence, is hard to determine. Nothing is more obvious, than to ſee men of known wealth and ability ſhrunk out of their proper character, and ſhuffling about the town with a weather-beaten wig, a threadbare coat, darned ſtockings, and a dirty ſhirt: they are ſo much out of their element, when dreſſed up, that they only then ſeem to think themſelves in diſguiſe; and yet expect people ſhould ſee their quality and circumſtances through their ruſty outſide, and pay a deference to their wealth, though cloaked in beggary.

This ſingularity is equally contemptible and blameworthy, as finicalneſs and foppery: but mankind in general is wedded to extremes. The medium between

tween a ſop and a ſloven, is what every man of ſenſe ſhould endeavour to keep, and not be ambitious of tranſgreſſing in either kind: we ſhould make the great Phocion's wife our example, who deſpiſed the more delicate parts of female garniture; and as Ælian in his various hiſtory words it, Ἡμπείχετο δὲ πρώτη μετὰ τῆ σωφροσύνη δεύτεροις γε μὴν τοῖς πρέπουσι: 'She 'firſt arrayed herſelf in temperance, and then put on 'what was neceſſary.' The expreſſion cannot need a comment, for its meaning is plain and eaſy to be comprehended.

The ſame author tells us, That when Diogenes came to Olympia, and perceived ſome Rhodian youths dreſſed with much ſplendor and magnificence, with a ſmile of contempt he ſaid to himſelf, 'This is all ar-'rogance.' Afterwards ſome Lacedæmonians falling in his way, as mean in habit as the former were fine, 'This,' ſays he, 'is another piece of arrogance.'

It was a cuſtom of the old philoſophers, and principally of the Cynics, to make an oſtentation of rags and naſtineſs; as if the firſt regular ſtep to wiſdom were to commence a ſloven. I do not well know how they ſupported their authority, or could make their precepts received by ſuch meaſures in thoſe ages; but I am ſure, at this time of day, few things make a man appear more deſpicable, or more prejudice his hearers againſt what he is going to offer, than an aukward or pitiful dreſs.

Therefore, as I have already more than once adviſed, let us reſtrain our conduct on this head to the bounds of moderation; and therein we ſhall be ſure to preſerve decency, and neither become the objects of diſreſpect or ridicule.

CON-

CONVERSATION,

AND THE

CHOICE of FRIENDS.

IT is a famous ſaying in Ariſtotle, that he who is pleaſed with ſolitude, muſt either be a wild beaſt, or a god. This obſervation ſeems to import thus much; that thoſe beings who can live without ſociable correſpondence, are extraordinary either in their defects or perfections: they muſt be under the ſtandard of human nature, or above it; and have ſomething that is either ſavage or divine in their compoſition.

The faculty of interchanging our thoughts with one another, or what we expreſs by the word converſation, has always been repreſented by moral writers as one of the nobleſt privileges of reaſon, and which more particularly ſets mankind above the brute part of the creation. Human nature is ſo imperfect, that it has not found enough to furniſh out a ſolitary life. Paradiſe barred from all commerce, would be inſupportable, and make a man run mad with his happineſs, ſince felicity conſiſts in the converſation and ſociety of ſome rational creature, to ſhare with us in thoſe things which we eſteem bleſſings.

If we conſider the whole ſcope of the creation that lies within our view, as in the natural and corporeal part, we ſhall perceive throughout a certain correſpondence of the parts, a ſimilitude of operation, and unity

unity of deſign; ſo in the moral and intellectual world we ſhall obſerve in ſpirits and minds of men a principle of attraction, whereby they are drawn together into communities, friendſhips, and the various ſpecies of ſociety. This correſponding ſocial appetite in human ſouls is the great ſpring and ſource of moral actions: it inclines us to an intercourſe with our ſpecies; produces that ſympathy in our natures, whereby we feel the pains and joys of our fellow creatures.

The benefit of converſation, if there was nothing elſe in it, would be no inconſiderable improvement; for diſcourſe creates a light within us, and diſpels the gloom and confuſion of the mind; it raiſes fancy, reinforces reaſon, and gives the productions of the mind better colour and proportion. 'Converſation, 'ſays Mr. Collier, is like the diſcipline of drawing 'out, and muſtering; it acquaints a man with his 'forces, and makes them fitter for ſervice.'

But not to confine myſelf barely to the definition, or abſtracted effects of converſation, I muſt obſerve, that at our firſt puſhing out into the world for ourſelves, we are ever for endeavouring to eſtabliſh an acquaintance; that acquaintance is naturally endeared by converſation; and the habitual converſation improved into a friendſhip: when we are once engaged with the ſociety of a man, the intimacy is contracted into narrower lines; we begin to deſire to participate of his counſels, think our own conceptions and deſigns imperfect till communicated, and are eager of pouring out the ſecrets of our ſouls.

This propenſity in nature ought to ſet us early on the exerciſe of our reaſon; if we are forward of contracting an intimacy, let our judgments firſt examine with whom; there are fatal conſequences attending a raſh converſation, as well as real advantages in a well-grounded union. Let us conſider betimes, e'er we are inſnared or ſeduced, that there are more companions in the world than good ones; that converſation does not conſiſt alone in empty prattle, or vain flaſhes

of

of wit and merriment, but rather an admonition and improvement.

The hours which we ſpend in converſation are the moſt pleaſing of any which we enjoy; yet there is very little care taken to improve ourſelves for the frequent repetition of them. And the common fault in this caſe, is that of growing too intimate, and falling into diſpleaſing familiarities, where even the deſign of converſation is inverted. If we were to give a ſerious attention to every trifling, vain, and impertinent thing ſaid in company, we ſhould be aſhamed to ſpeak or hear; we ſhould perhaps condemn ourſelves to a perpetual ſilence, more injurious to converſe than unprofitable diſcourſe.

It is a ſad thing, when men have neither wit enough to ſpeak well, nor judgment enough to hold their tongues; this is the foundation of all impertinence. Who can promiſe himſelf, in keeping much company, to avoid meeting with certain vain, light, familiar, and poſitive people, who are the ſpeaking men in converſation, and compel every one elſe to hear them? And yet perhaps theſe men either ſpeak before they think, or tediouſly ſtudy for every thing they ſay. There is certainly ſuch a thing as ſpeaking well, ſpeaking juſtly, and ſpeaking ſeaſonably.

In the company we keep, we ſhall often meet with perſons who diſguſt us with their ridiculous expreſſions; with the novelty and impropriety of the terms they uſe, which come from no-body's mouth but their own, and were not deſigned by the firſt inventors to ſignify what they intended them for. They obſerve neither reaſon nor cuſtom in their diſcourſe, but ſpeak according to their fooliſh whimſies. Fond of being pleaſant and ſhining in converſation, they run inſenſibly into a peculiar jargon, which becomes at length their natural dialect. All their thoughts are wrapped up in metaphor; and they are above expreſſing any one thing in the common way.

How often are we teazed in company with a coxcomb, who ſtutters out ſome of his own follies and vani-

vanities; has ſo little conſideration for the time, perſons, or decency, that he tells every one their own without intending it; and no ſooner ſets himſelf down, but he diſobliges the whole table, and does not perceive it? Theſe companions are ſo grating and uneaſy, that one would ſubmit to be cloiſtered up in a cell, rather than ſupport the fatigue of them.

I have already obſerved, that on our coming into the world, we cannot be too cautious in the choice of our company; ſo neither can we ſet too great a guard on our lips, or think we may be careleſs what words eſcape us. We may as eaſily ſlip into offence with our tongues, as incur danger by too open and inquiſitive ears; and this way ruin the advantages of converſation; for though the comforts of human life depend on ſociety, though it is a pleaſure of the firſt magnitude, yet company is ſo dangerous, and ſpeech ſo liable to be depraved, that what was intended for our advantage, becomes often the ſource of our greateſt misfortunes. We are apt to count it a part of our birthright to let looſe our tongues, and to uſe the ſpur where we ſhould uſe the bridle. Thus converſation is generally corrupted; and he that enters into company, has almoſt as many ſnares as companions. Every one, by his diſcourſe, example, or behaviour, does recommend to us, or imprint in us, or by a kind of contagion inſenſibly infect us with ſome vice or other; ſo that converſation, which was intended to cultivate our minds, and civilize the world, hath turned it almoſt to a wilderneſs.

But therefore ſhall we take pet at the world? Shall we run into deſarts, to avoid ſociety, and bury ourſelves in ſolitude, for fear of being infected? Shall we quit our ſtations in life, turn ſavage by ourſelves, and ſuffer no company, for fear of bad? No, it is ſufficient only that we uſe caution; that we borrow aſſiſtances from our ſenſe, our reaſon, and our education; that our words and manners be ſtrict and unblemiſhed; and that we labour neither to be ſeduced to our detriment, or lay ſnares for trapping of others.

This

This is a point of ſuch importance, that upon it depends the whole courſe of young gentlemen's lives and manners: the frequenting with wicked companions, brings them acquainted with vice, makes them behold it without emotion; by degrees they begin to act it with ſome pleaſure, and time breeds in them a habit of loving it.

St. Auguſtine, by a low, but very apt alluſion, has ſet out the danger of ill company; 'It is a nail,' ſays he, 'driven into a poſt with a hammer, which after 'the firſt and ſecond ſtroke, may be drawn out with 'little difficulty; but being once driven up to the 'head, the pincers can take no hold to draw it out; 'which cannot be done but by deſtruction of the 'wood.' It is even thus in relation to ſociety: we may be eaſily weaned from pernicious companions, before they are wedged into our ſouls, and incorporated with us; but when once they have taken hold of us by a ſtrong and deep intereſt, the ſeparation cannot be made without imminent prejudice. The phyſical advice of the poet, is very applicable to this ſubject,

Principiis obſta; ſerò medicina paratur,
Cum mala per longas invalûere moras.

'Guard againſt the firſt ſymptoms of your diſtemper;
'for medicines are applied too late when the ma-
'lady has got head through too long delays.'

The difference of men is in ſome meaſure to be read in their behaviour; and a ſhort obſervation of that will often tell us, as much as a long conference and intercourſe. It is our buſineſs, therefore, before we fix our companion, to take out leſſons from his deportment for our ſecurity; to ſurvey what recommendations he carries with him, and be as timorous, as we ſhould be of going aboard a leaky veſſel in a troubled ſea.

Now

Now, as the hazards are great of a diſſolute converſation; ſo, on the other hand, there is nothing that puts better thoughts in a man than a good companion: for example has the force of precept, and touches the heart with an affection to goodneſs. It is indeed a fair ſtep towards happineſs and virtue, to delight in the converſation of good and wiſe men; and where thoſe cannot be had, it is beſt to keep no company at all. There are ſome perſons whoſe company we cannot too much frequent; it is certain, by ſeeing them often, beſides the improvement we have by being with them, we gain a good eſteem to ourſelves, as we perfume ourſelves unawares by walking amongſt the jeſſamines and orange-trees. A man of good breeding and good morals hath ſolid virtues in him; and when we once love him for theſe endowments, we ſhall always love him.

However we are ſupplied with wit and learning, we ought ſtill to be more willing to hear than to ſpeak, to learn than to teach: it being a great folly to be more ready to ſhew all that is in us, rather than learn knowledge of another; to ſpend our own ſtock, rather than to get new. Applauſe attends a moderation in this reſpect; and we ſhall be valued while we are neither over ſilent, nor over talkative: the firſt error may lay us open to a cenſure of ſtupidity or ſcorn; and the latter will render us accuſable of giddineſs of the brain.

There is one unhappineſs of mixed converſation, which reigns too much in all companies; an affectation of being reputed orators, and ſpeaking above the pitch of comprehenſion. The beſt art of ſpeech ſhews itſelf under a natural dreſs. Our diſcourſe ſhould never ſmell of ſtudy and elaborateneſs: it is a pedantry that deſerves not the benefit of pardon: for unleſs our ſpeech be fitted to the capacities of thoſe we diſcourſe with, though it be never ſo elaborate, it will rather confound than edify. Too much fancy is not neceſſary in our converſation; it begets vain and puerile ideas, which tend neither to make us wiſer nor

better. Our thoughts ſhould be produced by good ſenſe and right reaſon, and ought always to be the effect of our judgment.

I do not know whether I am not in ſome ſort ſlipped from my argument, and giving directions, rather for our manner of ſpeech, than converſation in general: however, if this be not the main body of the ſubject, I dare ſay it muſt be looked upon as a material branch. We are obnoxious to ſo many criminal indecencies of expreſſion, that giddy and unintended words frequently make the danger of ſociety; and theſe habitual and uncorrected faults, often contribute to pervert the manners and debauch the mind.

Our words, and common ſtrain of talking, may be very blameable and pernicious in many kinds; they may be froward, abuſive, and ſcurrilous; they may be wanton, vicious, and obſcene; they may be loaded with oaths and imprecations, or tower into a yet higher blaſphemous impiety.

To ſpeak, and to offend with ſome people, are one and the ſame thing. Their diſpoſition is ſharp and bitter, their language mingled with gall and wormwood; and rattling, injury, and inſolence, run from their lips like ſpittle. The little vivacity and wit they have, do more hurt than other mens dulneſs; not always ſatisfied with giving ſharp anſwers, they attack frequently with arrogance; they ſtrike whenever they ſpeak, and wound the preſent and abſent, at leaſt, in their reputations. Inſtead of giving ourſelves over to ſuch rude and injurious liberties, we ſhould weigh our unborn words in the ballance, make our ſpeech temperate and decent, and keep it up to a ſtrain of courteſy and civility. Nothing can more charm than that graciouſneſs of language, *Quæ nè illos quidem quos damnat offendit*, 'That gives no offence, even where 'it gives reproof.' Good words are afforded at the ſame price as ill; and are not only cheap, but prevalent upon all occaſions. The air and manner, which we neglect as little things, are frequently what the world judge us by, and make them decide for or againſt

againſt us. A little care to appear obliging and polite before men, will prevent their making a bad judgment of us. The leaſt thing in the world is enough to make people believe we are proud, uncivil, diſdainful, and diſobliging. On the other hand, as little is required to be eſteemed the contrary. To make ourſelves be heard with pleaſure, we muſt ſay ſuch things as others will be glad to hear, and ſay them pleaſantly; which is the beſt way to make us be beloved: for politeneſs ſeems to be a certain care, by the manner of our words and actions, to make others pleaſed with us and themſelves. It gives a man the appearance of ſuppoſed virtues; and makes him ſeem that without, which he ought to be within. In ſhort, it puts merit forward, and renders it agreeable; and a man muſt have eminent qualifications to ſupport himſelf without it.

As to the ſecond vice of ſpeech, it is of a nature no apologies can excuſe; and whenever introduced in ſociety, ſhews converſation at a very low ebb indeed, or the morals of the company bad to a great degree: it is very rare that an artful double *entendre* can have a grace; but a downright obſcenity muſt always be ſhocking: modeſty is a qualification that ought to reign in all diſcourſes: we ſhould ſuppoſe her ſitting at the head of our tables; and expect her cenſure and ſevere correction, whenever we are rude enough to put her to the bluſh: let us be cautious of offending ſo nice a miſtreſs; nor let her ſee us pleaſed at wantonneſs. We ought to keep our hearts from drawing in the breath of obſcene diſcourſes; which are the very peſt of converſation. Let us guard our ears, check the pleaſure in our eyes, and preſerve our minds and inclinations untainted. We ſhould learn herein to imitate the philoſopher Xenocrates, who being aſked an obſcene queſtion, made no reply: being again importuned to anſwer, ſaid moſt commendably, *De tali re te hominem vanum interrogare decet, me autem reſpondere nequaquàm*; 'You ſhould not put your queſ-

'tions of this ſort to ſome vile and light companion; 'it is fitting in me to give you no anſwer.'

In ſhort, obſcene ſpeeches, like oil falling upon linen, will ſpread much; and as the poiſon of the body enters by the mouth, ſo the poiſon of the heart enters by the ear: and therefore thoſe who have honeſty in their hearts, will have only civil and modeſt words in their mouths.

The too common faſhion of oaths and imprecations, ſavours ſtrongly both of levity and prophaneneſs: it is a ſin that flies in the face of an expreſs commandment: our oaths call the ſacred King of heaven a witneſs to all the vanities we utter; who, were we rightly to conſider, can only teſtify to our diſobedience. We are not to take his name in vain, or to ſtrengthen our aſſeveration by ſuch an appeal: yet is this crime grown into a cuſtom; and the invocation of our Maker to every trifle, uſed but as a florid expletive in ſpeech. Diſcourſes are adorned with oaths and blaſphemies by way of tropes and figures; and yea, yea, and nay, nay, are not only literally, but ſignificantly baniſhed out of converſation. It muſt be both want of ſenſe and religion, that can make a man guilty in this kind; and it was excellently well ſaid, that this folly had no temptation to excuſe it, no man being born of a ſwearing conſtitution. The other ſpecies of this enormity, is an impious habit of imprecation. Daring and inſolent! Shall we that cannot add one cubit to our ſtature, wiſh damnation to the ſoul of our brother? Or ſhall we confirm the fooleries of our tongues, with calling down perdition on our own heads, and not expect the Almighty ſhould take us at our words?

Blaſpheming is another part of the execrable faults in ſpeech; and one that ſtands in the higheſt rank of impiety. It is an inſulting of heaven, and all things ſacred; a crime peculiarly of the growth of atheiſm, and which ſurely can be practiſed only by thoſe who have renounced all thoughts of futurity, flattered themſelves out of the exiſtence of a Godhead, that either hears or can avenge their impiety: I ſay, it ſhould be

be only theſe reprobates, that can give into a guilt of ſo horrid a complexion; yet I fear, this abomination is uſed for wit and gallantry, even by ſuch as are checked in conſcience at it; by ſuch as are ſcared with nature's common operations, and ſhrink into corners at the grumbling of thunder.

I will expatiate no farther on theſe heads; but rather draw them, and the ſubject of my diſcourſe into an application; which is, that we ſhould look on all theſe vices of the tongue with contempt, horror, and deteſtation; that we ſhould guard againſt the practice of them in ourſelves; and that caution will ſecure us from being infected by them in other perſons: it will be a direction in the choice of our acquaintance, and teach us to abandon the commerce of thoſe, who give themſelves a looſe in ſuch liberties. There is no greater mark nor diſcovery of a man, than to judge him by the company he keeps; it being impoſſible but that he ſhall much reſemble them, and partake of ſome of their qualities. Bad company is very contagious to the wiſeſt and beſt ſettled men; for, as Plutarch has ſomewhere obſerved, *Si juxta claudam habites, ſubclaudicare diſces*: 'If you live too near 'a lame man, he will unavoidably teach you to 'halt.'

Amongſt wiſe men, the principal end of company is conference; and conference to be bettered by, is not uſually met with in crowds: the chattering of magpies is better muſic than a conſort of ſenſeleſs perſons; and a deſart is to be preferred before debauched companions; for the wildneſs of the place is but unchearful, whilſt the wildneſs of lewd perſons is infectious.

Judgment and caution are therefore to be employed to direct us in the choice of thoſe, with whom we covet to be familiar and intimate; and we muſt not catch at the offers of every forward companion who courts our acquaintance. It will concern us much, not to be too raſh in faſtening on the next that may accidentally offer; nor preſently to affect every one

that pretends to be fond of our friendſhip. Let the ſearch rather begin on our own part; and our choice fix on thoſe who approve themſelves really worthy of our reſpect: for what is cheap, and with eaſe obtained, is too often below our notice. Perſons who officiouſly ſtick and twiſt themſelves about us, are generally ſuch as deſerve our ſcorn and contempt; and upon a long and ſerious view of all circumſtances, we ought rather to court the kindneſs of thoſe who are of repute in the world, and may prove moſt advantageous to ourſelves. The reply of the famous Zeuxis, to ſome who blamed the ſlowneſs of his pencil, deſerves our conſideration; 'That he therefore ſpent a long 'time in painting, becauſe he deſigned his work 'ſhould laſt to eternity.' So he that would ſecure a laſting friendſhip and acquaintance, muſt firſt deliberately judge, and thoroughly try its worth, before he ſettles it.

It may be objected, that this curioſity of choice and judgment is dependent on every caſual familiarity and commerce, and only of uſe in reſpect to the ſtricteſt friendſhips.

But let us conſider, that the moſt caſual converſation is an avenue to friendſhip, and the ſtricteſt unions generally are founded on ſlight occurrences. Familiarity and converſe are the genuine products and enjoyments of true friendſhip; and the higheſt pleaſure the beſt friends aim at, is a mutual exchange of good-humour, a daily complacency in each other's company, and a free communication of their thoughts, deſigns, and counſels. That which procures love and friendſhip in the world, is a ſweet and obliging temper of mind, a lively readineſs in doing good offices, together with a conſtant habit of virtue; than which qualifications, nothing is more rarely found in nature. This world is linked together by love, and men by converſation; and one of the greateſt pleaſures we enjoy herein (if duly weighed) is the ſweet ſociety of a friend, which multiplies our joys, and divides our griefs. There can be no ſtricter union upon earth,

than

than that of a virtuous friendſhip. And nothing can be more ſatisfactory, than to improve and benefit that perſon who is thus become a part of us.

I would not be thought to aſſert, that we ought to confine ourſelves only to one friend; but, amongſt the reſt, there ſhould be one eminently ſo. The term carries ſociety in it; but affects not a herd or number. A friend being uſually called and eſteemed another ſelf, is a convincing argument, that the number two is the adequate and compleat number of friendſhip; and ſuch was it accounted by the Roman poet, when he ſaid, *Nos duo turba ſumus.* The moſt eager affection, if derived among numerous objects, like a river derived into ſeveral channels, muſt needs flow very weak and languiſhing. Laying all at once the foundations of ſeveral acquaintances, we leave each unfiniſhed; and when we have ſcarce fixed on one, our love immediately palls there, while we paſſionately purſue ſome other: like women of the town, admitting the embraces of all gallants that come; at the gay appearance of the laſt which occurred, we neglect, ſlight, and forget the former, and one joſtles the image of the other out of our fancies.

The uſeful and profitable converſations, which give a right ſtamp and impreſſion to our minds, are thoſe friends that will be ſupporters to us in our proſperities, ſafeguards in our difficulties, counſellors in our doubts, and comforts in our adverſities. With thoſe we ought to contract a ſtrict acquaintance and inwardneſs, and embrace their company upon all fitting opportunities. We ſhall ſee ſome who have hot and cold fits of friendſhip; that ſhall hug you one day, and not know you the next. This unevenneſs of temper is by all means to be avoided in converſation: a good man will always keep a ſteady courſe of friendſhip, which may always run like a ſmooth ſtream, and never change, but be a perpetual ſpring.

There are three requiſites, as Plutarch tells us, to true friendſhip; virtue, as a thing lovely and deſirable; familiar converſation, as pleaſant; and advan-

tage, as neceſſary. For we muſt firſt chuſe a friend upon a right judgment made of his excellent qualities: having choſen him, we muſt perceive a pleaſure in his converſe; and upon occaſion, he muſt be uſeful to us in our concerns. All which (eſpecially judgment in in our choice, the main point of all) are inconſiſtent with a numerous acquaintance.

Now, that human friendſhips are partly founded upon the wants and imperfections of nature, may be ſaid without diſparagement to ſo noble a relation. The exchange of offices, when it is managed with frankneſs and fidelity, excites native generoſity, and improves into confidence and affection. Indeed, to derive friendſhip meerly from indigence, is, in my opinion, to miſtake its original, and aſſign it too mean an extraction. Inclination, and eſteem, and generoſity, ſeem more creditable and likely cauſes of ſo noble a production. It is worth, and bravery, and good-humour, which engage one virtuous perſon to another. Theſe qualities excite admiration, and admiration improves into love, and love proceeds to intimacy and union.

I believe I may add, that conformity of judgment and temper ſeem no inconſiderable motives to begin a friendſhip. A reſemblance in humour or opinion, a fancy for the ſame buſineſs or diverſion, is oftentimes a ground of affection. Men love to ſee their thoughts and inclinations approved; and nature, like Narciſſus, is ſtrangely taken with its own reflection. A man ſees his own being, as it were, doubled and extended in his friend; and then it is no wonder if he loves him. This ſo frequent riſe of friendſhip gives no ſmall ſanction to Ariſtotle's definition of it, Μίαν ψυχὴν δυοῖν σωμάτοιν ἐνοικῆσαν, 'that it is compoſed of a ſingle 'ſoul inhabiting a pair of bodies.'

The poets, whoſe deſcriptions ought always to have truth and nature in view, through all ages, even down to the moderns, have kept up to the ſame notions of this great union; and Dryden's Anthony and Dolobella, are a ſubſtantial proof of it.

—I had

——— I had a friend that lov'd me,
I was his ſoul, he liv'd not but in me.
We were ſo clos'd within each other's breaſts,
The rivets were not found that join'd us firſt:
That does not reach us yet;—We were ſo mix'd
As meeting ſtreams; both to ourſelves were loſt:
We were one maſs; we could not give or take
But from the ſame; for he was I; I he.

Tully was the firſt who obſerved, that friendſhip improves happineſs, and abates miſery, by the doubling of our joy, and dividing of our grief. Theſe are effects, indeed, that extreamly add to the price of an intimacy; for the beſt ſociety and converſation, is that in which the heart has a greater ſhare than the head. 'Thoſe who have no friend to diſcharge their 'cares, and their grievances upon, ſays Mr. Collier, 'are (if one may uſe ſo harſh an expreſſion) a ſort of 'cannibals to themſelves, and prey upon their own 'vitals.' A ſwelling diſcontent is apt to ſuffocate and ſtrangle without paſſage: whereas thoſe who live within the communication of friendſhip, have a vent for their misfortunes. They may ſafely go to the bottom of the matter, report the niceſt caſe, and expoſe the part affected to care and compaſſion. Friendſhip has a noble effect upon all accidents and conditions: it relieves our cares, raiſes our hopes, and abates our fears: it doubles our joys, and divides our griefs. A friend who relates his ſucceſs, talks himſelf into a new pleaſure: and by opening his misfortunes, leaves part of them behind him. Friendſhip, like ſome univerſal medicine, works contrary ways, but always to the benefit of nature. And as the union of bodies fortifies the action at home, and weakens the impreſſions of violence; ſo there is a proportionable improvement from the union of minds.

It is Cicero's advice, that we ſhould prefer friendſhip to all human things; and his reaſon is, *Nihil eſt enim tam Naturæ aptum, tam conveniens ad res, vel ſecundas vel adverſas:* 'Becauſe there is nothing ſo

'agreeable to nature, or ſo convenient to our affairs, 'whether in proſperity or adverſity.' It is a quality of that refined nature, that it abſolutely renounces a commerce with vice; and virtue alone begets or maintains it.

What is life to him who cannot repoſe his cares on the mutual benevolence of a friend? What greater bleſſing is there, than to poſſeſs the man with whom you may intruſt the ſecrets of your ſoul as ſafely as with yourſelf? Where would be the great advantage of good fortune, without a partner to ſhare the joys of your ſucceſs? So calamity would be an inſupportable weight, without one whoſe pity and condoling kindneſs are fond of eaſing you of half your burthen. All other things deſirable in life are good, as appropriated to ſome particular: money ſerves our uſes; riches procures us reſpect; honours gain us applauſe; pleaſures contribute to our enjoyment of the world; health ſecures us againſt pain, and gives us the true uſe of our limbs. Friendſhip contains in it a number of conveniencies: it is of ſervice in all exigencies and circumſtances of life; is to be excluded from no place or occaſion; can never be unſeaſonable, never troubleſome.

The ſame great orator gives a ſignal inſtance of the force of friendſhip, and its conſonance to human nature. When Marcus Pacuvius wrote his tragedy of Pylades and Oreſtes, wherein the latter being in danger from the reſentments of a prince, to whom he was perſonally unknown, the gallant Pylades, to reſcue his friend from death, proclaimed that he was Oreſtes; and Oreſtes, as fearful of his friend's danger, ſtrove to convince them of the error they were running into through the generoſity of Pylades, and as conſtantly aſſerted, that he alone was the obnoxious perſon. The philoſopher makes the following remark on ſo pathetic an incident: *Stantes plaudebant in re fictâ: quid arbitramur in verâ fuiſſe facturos? Facile indicabat ipſa natura vim ſuam; cùm homines, quod facere ipſi non poſſent, id rectè fieri in altero judicarent:* 'Audience, ſays

ſays he, 'applauded the fiction; what are we to think 'they would have done, had it been a reality? Nature 'herſelf, without conſtraint, confeſſed her force, when 'men judged that bravely done in another, which 'they could not have performed themſelves.'

Now, though many and ſignal advantages are reaped from friendſhip, yet it ought not to flow from a ſordid hope thereof, or be founded on ſo baſe a bottom as intereſt; for as we are liberal, and inclined to good offices, not to make a merit, or be thanked for our ſervices, (for we are not to play the uſurers in benefits, but be carried to bounty by a propenſity in nature;) ſo we muſt conceive, that friendſhip is not to be ſought from a view to profit, and an avaricious inclination, but all its fruits and advantages ſhould conſiſt in the paſſion of love and mutual benevolence. This correſpondence of love is to put them on an abſolute equality; and all their emulation and ſtrife muſt be, which can get the ſtart in acts of kindneſs.

On whatever terms of inequality the union be contracted, love muſt reconcile the lines of difference, and make them run parallel. He that ſtands on an eminence of fortune, muſt ſtoop his hand for his friend, and raiſe him up towards his own ground: the advantage muſt be laid aſleep. There muſt be no challenge of ſuperiority, or diſcountenancing of freedom on the one hand; nothing of envy or repining on the other. As far as prudence and juſtice will permit we ought to uſe a friend with all the frankneſs and generoſity imaginable. There muſt be no ſtinting of inclination, no computing upon favours, for fear we ſhould do more than we receive; for this is more like merchandize than friendſhip. Exactneſs, and management, and obſervation, are ſigns of indifferency and diſtruſt: ſuch a practice may do well enough among ſtrangers; but a friend ſhould be treated at a nobler rate, and uſed with more confidence and affection. We ſhould examine his occaſions, and prevent his deſires; nor give him time to think he wanted an aſſiſtance. A for-

wardneſs to oblige, is a great grace upon a kindneſs and doubles the intrinſic worth.

If the conſiderations of profit were to be the cement of friendſhip, as the advantage ſlackened, the union would diſſolve: but as nature cannot be changed; ſo friendſhips, eſtabliſhed on her principles, are never impaired, but are of equal duration with life.

It ought to be a principal law in friendſhips, neither to require an unjuſt thing to be done, nor to do one on importunity: friendſhip there loſes its name, where violations of conſcience or honour intrude. All importunities againſt juſtice, are feveriſh deſires and not to be qualified. He that would engage me unwarrantably, takes me for an ill perſon: his motion is an affront, and I ought to renounce him for the injury of his opinion: this rule proves the maxim I but now advanced, That 'real friendſhip could only be amongſt 'good men, and exiſts in virtue.'

'It has been a pretty difficult queſtion' (ſays CICERO) 'whether new friends, that are not unworthy 'of being admitted into friendſhip, are ever to be preferred to old ones: as it is uſual to eſteem young 'horſes above thoſe worn with years and ſervice. A 'doubt,' ſays he, 'unworthy of a man: for we ought 'not to be ſatiated with friendſhip, as with other 'things.' Moſt things (like wines that will bear age) ſhould have an additional ſweetneſs from time: and in this one inſtance under debate, we may believe the wiſdom of the ſon of Sirach: 'forſake not an old 'friend; for the new is not comparable to him: a 'new friend is as new wine; when it is old thou ſhalt 'drink it with pleaſure.'

As we are to indulge a friend when choſe, ſo likewiſe our election muſt be regulated by time: we are not to be raſh and precipitate, but let deliberation and judgment approve our choice. Βραδέως μὴν φίλος γένε, ſays SOCRATES; 'Make thyſelf a friend 'ſlowly.' The ſacred author, I before quoted, ſtrikes in with the reaſonableneſs of this opinion; 'If thou 'wouldſt

'wouldſt get a friend, prove him firſt, and be not 'haſty to credit: for ſome man is a friend for his own 'occaſion, and will not abide in the day of thy 'trouble: and there is a friend, who being turned to 'enmity and ſtriſe, will diſcover thy reproach.' 'Tis plain, therefore, that we ought to make choice of perſons of ſuch honour, for our friends, as, if they ſhould ceaſe to be ſo, will not abuſe our confidence, nor give us cauſe to fear them as enemies.

As the danger of converſation lies in the ſociety of perſons of vicious principles, ſo the greateſt hazard of contracting friendſhips, is for fear of falling into the hands of flatterers: for, flattery, to deſcribe it, in a word, is no better than intereſt under the diſguiſe of friendſhip: 'tis a ſmooth application to the vanity of another. The art conſiſts in ſtealing on the blind ſide, ſeizing the humour, and managing the weakneſs of a willing property: with one of this conſtitution, Terence's obſervation is valid, *Obſequium amicos, veritas odium parit:* 'That obſequiouſneſs alone makes them 'friends, and telling the truth incurs their averſion.'

The wealthy and the powerful are moſt obnoxious to this ſort of impoſition. A flatterer's aim is generally intereſt; and therefore he'll endeavour to ply where there is moſt to be gotten. Thieves don't uſe to ſet upon beggars; a poor man's brains are not worth the plundering: he may be allowed to underſtand himſelf, and make the moſt of his diſcretion, if he pleaſes. To purſue ſuch game as this, is but loſs of time, and ſetting a butterfly.

As conformity of manners goes one ſtep towards the eſtabliſhing of friendſhip; the flatterer will be ſure to take care to ſuit the temper of him he means to play upon: his buſineſs is to counterfeit the inclination, and affect the diverſions of another: he is for town or country, for company or retirement, for exerciſe or eaſe, as the world is given, and the freak of his property directs.

Did flattery, indeed, as moſt other misfortunes do, generally, or altogether, wait on the debauched and ignoble

ignoble part of mankind, the miſchief were of leſs conſequence, and might admit of an eaſier prevention: but, as worms breed moſt in ſweet and tender woods, ſo uſually the moſt obliging, the moſt brave, and generous tempers, readylieſt receive, and longeſt entertain the flattering inſect that hangs and grows upon them. It is a diſeaſe, which I fear, too many bring upon themſelves by harbouring too large ideas of their own merit, which makes them think another cannot well outpraiſe them. Our affections uſually blind our diſcerning faculties; and hence it is that we are ſo frequently expoſed to the attempts of a paraſite, under the diſguiſe and vizard of a friend. For ſelf-love, that grand flatterer within, willingly entertains another from without, who will but ſooth up and ſecond the man in the good opinion he has conceived of himſelf. For he who deſervedly lies under the character of one that loves to be flattered, is doubtleſs ſufficiently fond of himſelf; and through abundance of complaiſance to his own perſon, not only wiſhes, but thinks himſelf maſter of all thoſe perfections which may recommend him to others.

It is a buſineſs, of no ſmall importance, and which requires no ordinary circumſpection, ſo to be able to know a flatterer in every ſhape he aſſumes, that the counterfeit reſemblance ſome time or other bring not true friendſhip itſelf into ſuſpicion and diſrepute: a man may hold an unknown flatterer in his boſom, till the hour of trial once advances, when his verbal friendſhip ſhould be put in practice, and his ſwoln pretenſions of ſervice amount to ſomething more than a bare profeſſion. For then he begins to confeſs falſehood, withdraws his familiarity, puts on airs of conſtraint and coolneſs, and yet would be thought rather to ſeem ſorry that he cannot, than unwilling to lend his aſſiſtance. Shakeſpear, in a ſpeech of his Julius Cæſar, has admirably deciphered theſe ſhadows of friendſhip, where he thus obſerves;

——Ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to ſlacken and decay,

It

It uſeth an inforced ceremony;
There are no tricks in plain and ſimple faith:
But hollow men, like horſes hot at hand,
Make gallant ſhew and promiſe of their mettle;
But when they ſhould endure the bloody ſpur,
They fall their oreſt, and like deceitful jades,
Sink in the trial.'

This is the true characteriſtic of a profeſſing friend, and the direct oppoſite of a real active one. *Amicus certus in re incertâ cernitur*, ſays Ennius: a true friend is diſtinguiſhed in the criſis of hazard and neceſſity; when the gallantry of his aid may ſhew the worth of his ſoul, and the loyalty of his heart. The ſame ſincerity of love, that taught his tongue to ſpeak kind things, engages him to confirm his kindneſs by action.

Flattery, in ſhort, is nothing but falſe friendſhip, fawning hypocriſy, diſhoneſt civility, baſe merchandize of words, and a plauſible diſcord of the heart and lips. His tongue walks ever in one track of unjuſt praiſes; and can no more tell how to diſcommend, than to ſpeak true. His heart is nothing but a delightful couſenage, whoſe rules are ſmoothing and guarded with perjury; whoſe ſcope is to make men fools, in teaching them to overvalue themſelves.

As Euripides ſays of truth, That 'it loves plain lan-'guage;' ſo the temper of a friend is ſincere, natural, without paint or varniſh; but that of a flatterer, as it is corrupt and diſeaſed in itſelf, ſo ſtands it in need of many, and thoſe curious and exquiſite remedies too, to correct it.

It muſt be our care, therefore, with the utmoſt penetration we are maſters of, to make diſcoveries of the man we would cheriſh; to know ourſelves and diſtinguiſh him. For flattery is an enſnaring quality, and leaves a very dangerous impreſſion; it ſwells a man's imagination, entertains his vanity, and drives him to dotage upon his perſon. Some people are flattered out of common ſenſe, their underſtanding is ſpirited away,

away, and they have hardly the leaſt glimpſe of themſelves. They live, as it were, under deluſion, repoſe prodigious confidence in the ſuccours of their ſpecious friend, and think it is impoſſible they can ever be unhappy. Indeed, the friend whom virtue or religion hath gained, who is not fixed either by gain or pleaſure, him extremity doth but faſten; whilſt, like a well-wrought vault, he lies the ſtronger, by how much more weight he bears. When neceſſity calls him to it, he can be a ſervant to his equal, with the ſame will wherewith he can command his inferior. Theſe qualities are the touchſtones of friendſhip, and that diſcover the baſe metal of the flatterer: for when misfortunes begin to pinch and embaraſs, when his aid is required to diſengage you, if he regards your perſon, and values your converſation, the correſpondence will go on, and the old ſigns of friendſhip continue: but if he grows willing to drop the acquaintance, and withdraw his ceremony, if his air grows flat, and his countenance cools, theſe are all indications of falſehood and management. This change of behaviour argues his former fondneſs was only to furniſh his fancy, and ſerve his convenience.

But it will not be wiſdom in us to ſtay till ſuch fatal junctures, and then to try the experiment; which will not only be uſeleſs, but dangerous and hurtful: for it is a deplorable thing for a man to find himſelf then deſtitute of friends, when he moſt wants them, and has not an opportunity neither of exchanging his falſe and faithleſs for a faſt and honeſt friend. And therefore we ſhould rather try our friend, as we do our money; whether or no he be paſſable and current, before we need him. For it is not enough to diſcover the cheat to our coſt, but we muſt ſo underſtand the flatterer, that he put no cheat upon us: otherwiſe we ſhould act like thoſe who needs take poiſon to know its ſtrength, and fooliſhly hazard their lives, to inform their judgments.

But as a reaſonable caution is neceſſary, as our reaſon muſt endeavour to defend us againſt frauds; ſo,

on

on the other hand, prejudice and capricious jealouſies, are not to lead us into too light ſuſpicions. We need not think every compliment paid us, is deſigning and treacherous; commendations, though too often ſavouring of artifice, are not always certain proofs of flattery. 'Tis true, to be always ringing of people's praiſes in their ears, and burning perfumes before them, ſmells ſtrongly of deſign: however, to commend upon ſome occaſion is a defenſible practice, proper acknowledgment, and a ſerviceable office. It ſhews the juſtice and benevolence of our temper, and that we are pleaſed with the advantage of our neighbour. We are not immediately to ſuſpect a pleaſant and an eaſy converſation for a cheat: for a friend is not a dull taſteleſs thing; nor does the decorum of friendſhip conſiſt in ſourneſs and auſterity of temper, but its very port and gravity is ſoft and amiable.

Indeed, did not the laws of friendſhip admit of a little pleaſantry and good humour, why would the paraſite inſinuate himſelf under that diſguiſe? And yet he, as counterfeit gold, imitates the brightneſs and luſtre of the true, always puts on the eaſineſs and freedom of a friend, is always pleaſant and obliging, and ready to comply with the humour of his company. And therefore 'tis no way reaſonable to look upon every juſt character that is given us as a piece of flattery: for certainly a due and ſeaſonable commendation is as much the duty of one friend to another, as a pertinent and ſerious reprehenſion: nay, indeed, a ſour querulous temper is perfectly repugnant to the laws of friendſhip and converſation: whereas a man takes a chiding patiently from a friend, who is as ready to praiſe his virtues, as to animadvert upon his vices; willingly perſuading himſelf that mere neceſſity obliged him to reprimand, whom kindneſs had firſt moved to commend him.

May it not be ſaid then, that it is infinitely difficult to diſcover the diſparity, and diſtinguiſh the flatterer from the friend, ſince there is no apparent difference either betwixt the ſatisfaction they create, or the praiſes

they

they beſtow. For ſince friendſhip is agreeable and entertaining, flattery refines upon the character, and creeps in under this diſguiſe. Nothing is ſo ſmooth as a paraſite. He ſtrains his courteſy, and carries the complaiſance to an exceſs; he waits upon every turn of humour, ſtrikes in with the freaks, and commends the follies of his property: but then to cover himſelf from ſuſpicion, he makes profeſſion of great impartiality, and clear dealing. He declares againſt winking at the weakneſs of a friend, and ſuffer him to miſcarry without notice. Without this quality, he cries, 'Friendſhip is betrayed, and there's no being true to 'the engagements of honour.' By ſuch kinds of artifice does he faſten his intereſt, make himſelf maſter of the perſon he practiſes upon, works himſelf into credit, eſteem, careſſes, and is let into affection without being ſuſpected.

It was an artful, as well as noted diſſimulation in Alcibiades, to ſmother his particular genius and inclination, and conforming himſelf to appearance, to put on the manners and diſpoſitions of every country where he reſided: was it not being a great maſter in the profeſſion, and flattering a whole city or nation at once? While he lived at Athens, he affected pleaſantry and jeſting, kept horſes for the race, followed the mode, and appeared with an equipage: when he dwelt at Sparta, he walked the ſtreets in a mean habit, and conformed to the diſcipline and unornamented manner of that republic: when he travelled into Thrace, he put on a military humour, and was all for fighting and battle: when he removed from thence into the Perſian dominions, he became a finiſhed debauchee, complied with the licence of the place, and ſpent his time in balls, intrigues, and entertainments. The common flatterer is but ſuch a conformiſt in a narrower circle; his game is confined to one object, and that he indefatigably purſues.

'Tis the height of injuſtice,' ſays Plato, 'to ap-'pear juſt, and be really a knave.' So are we to look on thoſe flatterers as moſt dangerous, who walk not

not barefaced, but in diſguiſe; who make no ſport, but mind their buſineſs: for theſe often perſonate the true and ſincere friend ſo exactly, that it is enough to make him fall under the like ſuſpicion of a cheat, unleſs we be extremely curious in remarking the difference betwixt them. Now, becauſe the enjoyment of a friend is attended with the greateſt ſatisfaction incident to humanity, therefore the flatterer always endeavours to render his converſation highly pleaſant and agreeable.

It has been an obſervation, that a flatterer may be diſcerned by counterfeiting imperfections, imitating bad qualities, and pretending a reſemblance of misfortune. When Dionyſius of Sicily grew dim-ſighted, his courtiers pretended it was an epidemical diſtemper, tumbled upon one another, as if they were almoſt blind, and threw down the ſide-boards, and the diſhes. Thus, in the reign of Alexander the Great, a wry neck was the general faſhion. This imitation of depravities is every day conſpicuous amongſt the claſs of mankind, who think to inſinuate themſelves by compliance of faſhions and geſtures, which it would be more commendable to avoid.

It is a taſk above my power to aſcertain all the rules by which a flatterer may ſtand diſcloſed, or to enter into a detail of cautions, by which any one may be ſecured againſt his attempts: the art of the vocation is ſo dependant on circumſtances of action and fortune, and a thouſand varieties that cannot be preſcribed to. As I have before ſaid, we muſt uſe our ſenſe and judgment in the election of our friends, grow acquainted with the character they bear in the world, before we take them into our boſom, and by the beſt pre-knowledge we can gather from obſervation and report, prevent the danger of being ſurprized with treachery. For there is nothing more troubleſome in human ſociety, than the diſappointment of truſt, and failing of friends: for beſides the diſorder that works in our own affairs, it commonly is attended with a neceſſary deficiency of our performance to others. The leaning upon

upon a broken reed gives us both a fall and a wound: ſuch is a falſe friend, who after profeſſions of love, and real offices, either ſlinks from us, or betrays us.

Plutarch, in his books of morals, has wrote a copious chapter concerning the differences of a friend and flatterer, and laid down ſeveral rules whereby they may be known aſunder: the ſteps which the flatterer takes to conceal his hypocriſy, and appear a friend, and the means by which his artifice may be diſcovered. The curious reader may conſult him on this head; but I believe he will be able to help himſelf more from natural prudence, and a little obſervation, than volumes of written directions.

Leſt I ſhould be thought more prolix, than uſeful on this ſubject, I ſhall ſubjoin but a few obſervations more, and proceed on another topic. It is granted, as I have above advanced, that the comfort of life depends upon converſation, on good offices and concord: for human ſociety is like the working of an arch of ſtone; all would fall to the ground, if one piece did not ſupport another. We ſhould remember, that we are ſeveral members of one great body; that we are all of a conſanguinity, formed of the ſame materials, and deſigned to the ſame end: this obliges us to a natural tenderneſs and converſe; and the other to live with a regard to equity and juſtice.

I have likewiſe obſerved, that the love of ſociety is natural; but that the choice of our company is matter of virtue and prudence. Ill examples, pleaſure, and eaſe, are, no doubt of it, great corrupters of manners; and as an ill air may endanger a good conſtitution, ſo may either a place or perſon of ill example endanger a good man. He that converſes with the proud, ſhall learn inſenſibly to be puffed up; and an acquaintance with the licentious and diſſolute, ſhall teach a man to be a libertine and incontinent. Hannibal himſelf was unmanned by the looſeneſs of Campania; and though a conqueror by his arms, was overcome by his pleaſures, and ſhrunk from all the glory

glory obtained at Cannæ, by the luxury he ſuffered himſelf to fall into at Capua.

Let us know never ſo many ſage rules for our conduct, and be taught by written wiſdom to avoid the paths of error and hazard, yet if we meet with living precedents to warrant our deviation, the inſtruction loſes ground with the mind, and we are won over to vice and folly by the powerful influence of evil communication. Men may give great credit to their ears; but they take much ſtronger impreſſions from example, than precept. For there is juſt the ſame difference in this reſpect, as there is in dramatic poetry, betwixt the force of a narration, and an object preſented:

Segnius irritant animos demiſſa per aures,
Quàm quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta fidelibus.

It often happens, that what we read, though we firmly believe it to be right, we neglect to put in practice; but what we ſee, though we know it to be a wrong ſtrain, and of fatal conſequence, we are too ſubject to follow and incline to.

But leaving it for granted, that of all felicities, the moſt charming is that of a firm and gentle friendſhip; but that the great difficulty reſts in the choice of the perſon, I ſhall conclude with a ſhort view of the advantages reſulting from this ſacred intimacy, when this choice is properly made.

Now, that advantages may follow from our contracting friendſhips, it is very eſſential to this end, that the partner of our love be virtuous and honeſt; for vice is contagious, and there is no truſting of the ſound and the ſick together. That friendſhip, where mens affections are cemented by an equal and common love of goodneſs, it is not either hope or fear, or any private intereſt, that can ever diſſolve; but we carry it with us to the grave, and lay down our lives for it with ſatisfaction. True friends are the whole world to one another; their converſation is ever new to each other, ever endearing: for as there is no reliſh in the poſſeſſing

ſing of any thing without a partner, ſo there is no reliſh wanting to any thing dividing it with a true one. Even the correſpodence by letter of an abſent friend, gives more real ſatisfaction, than the ſociety of twenty indifferent perſons: in reading his epiſtles, I can ſuffer myſelf to be deluded, and fancy I have his company; and when I anſwer them, I do not only write, but ſpeak: for in effect, a friend is an eye, a heart, a tongue, a hand, at all diſtances. I look upon my thoughts to be as ſafe in his breaſt as my own; and in this belief can I unburthen my ſoul, and eaſe my heart of all its diſquietudes. I can depend on his virtue and ſincere kindneſs; and therefore ought, without any ſcruple, to make him the confidant of my moſt ſecret cares and counſels: for it goes a great way towards the making of a man faithful to let him underſtand that you think him ſo: and he who does but ſo much as ſuſpect that I will deceive him, gives me a ſort of right to couzen him. If then our hearts are one, ſo muſt be our intereſts and convenience: for friendſhip lays all things in common; and nothing can be good to the one, that is ill to the other. And is not this a felicity, this an advantage?

In a word, unleſs then we can find a perſon in whom we may repoſe this abſolute confidence, with whom we may ſhare our fortune and diſappointments, let us be cautious how we carry our intimacy farther than an acquaintance; but when we have once fixed on the man in whom our friendſhip may be ſecure, it ſhould be the buſineſs, as well as the pleaſure of our lives, to improve the union, and never let it be diſſolved but by that which ſeparates the ſoul from the body. I ſhall conclude with the advice of Polonius in Hamlet;

> 'The friends thou haſt, and their adoption try'd,
> Grapple them to thy ſoul with hoops of ſteel.'

LOVE

LOVE AND GALLANTRY.

CUSTOM and faſhion have made it ſo univerſal, that the youth of our age are no ſooner entered into converſation, but they muſt likewiſe have an amour on their hands, and run into a vein of modiſh gallantries. Nature and conſtitution invite to the former; and companions, that ſtrike in with the the gaiety of their years, provoke them to the latter: yet to be in love, is not always the effect of nature, but mere gallantry; and young gentlemen eſteem it a part of their duty, to make addreſſes of complaiſance, if not of ſincerity, to the ladies.

I confeſs, I would not chuſe to have my ſon too forward in this paſſion: a love of ſincerity too early begun has inconveniences and uneaſy conſequences; and an amour of perfect gallantry is a deceit I would bluſh to have him guilty of. Love ſeizes on us ſuddenly, without giving us time to reflect; our diſpoſition, or weakneſs favours the ſurprize; one look, one glance from the fair, fixes and determines us. Young hearts are tender and flexible, and apt to take ſtrong, as well as ſudden impreſſions from beauty; and as the iſſues of this paſſion are of the greateſt moment in life, a thouſand circumſtances are to regulate its raſhneſs, and every youth ſhould ſet a guard on his eyes and breaſt, for fear of being captivated by an improper

proper object. It is for this reaſon that I would endeavour to direct, and not pretend to eradicate the inclinations of the ſexes to each other. Daily experience ſhews us, that the moſt rude ruſtic grows humane, as ſoon as he is inſpired by this paſſion; it gives a new grace to our manners, a new dignity to our minds, a new viſage to our perſons: whether we are inclined to liberal arts, to arms, or addreſs in our exerciſe, our improvement is haſtened by a particular object whom we would pleaſe. Chearfulneſs, gentleneſs, fortitude, liberality, magnificence, and all the virtues which adorn men, which inſpire heroes, are moſt conſpicuous in lovers; but yet this refinement of the ſoul may overtake us at a wrong ſeaſon, and attach us to a perſon, in the careſſing of whom parents may be diſobeyed, and friends diſobliged.

It is remarkable that no paſſion has been treated by all who have touched upon it with the ſame bent of deſign, but this. The poets, the moraliſts, the painters, in all their deſcriptions, allegories, and pictures, have repreſented it as a ſoft torment, a bitter ſweet, a pleaſing pain, or an agreeable diſtreſs, and have only expreſſed the ſame thought in a different manner. It is certain there is no other paſſion which does produce ſuch contrary effects in ſo great a degree. But this may be ſaid for love, that if you ſtrike it out of the ſoul, life would be inſipid, and our being but half animated. Human nature would ſink into deadneſs and lethargy, if not quickned with ſome active principle; and as for all others, whether ambition, envy, or avarice, which are apt to poſſeſs the mind in the abſence of this paſſion, it muſt be allowed that they have greater pains, without the compenſation of ſuch exquiſite pleaſures, as thoſe we find in love.

The old mythologiſts made Venus the mother of two different Cupids; the one of which, was the god of innocent and pure deſires; the other of unlawful and carnal pleaſures. To unperſonate theſe chimerical beings, and reduce them to qualities, the firſt is what

what we call love; and the latter luſt; which, in their natures, differ as much as a matron from a proſtitute, or a companion from a buffoon. Their diſtinct deſcriptions in the poets, are full of inſtruction, as well as ſpirit. Love is a beautiful blind child, adorned with a quiver and bow, which he plays with, and ſhoots around him, without deſign or direction; to intimate to us, that the perſon beloved has no intention to give us the anxieties we meet with, but that the beauties of a worthy object are like the charms of a lovely infant. On the other ſide, the ſages figured luſt in the form of a ſatyr, of ſhape, part human, part beſtial; to ſignify, that the followers of it proſtitute the reaſon of a man to purſue the appetites of a beaſt. This ſatyr is made to haunt the paths and coverts of the wood-nymphs and ſhepherdeſſes, to lurk on the banks of rivulets, and watch the purling ſtreams, as the reſorts of retired virgins; to ſhew, that lawleſs deſire tends chiefly to prey upon innocence, and has ſomething ſo unnatural in it, that it hates its own make, and ſhuns the object it loved, as ſoon as it has made it like itſelf. Love, therefore, is a child that complains and bewails its inability to help itſelf: luſt, a watchful thief, which ſeizes its prey, and lays ſnares for its own relief; and its principal object being innocence, it never robs, but it murders at the ſame time.

From theſe two diſtinct ideas, we may ſettle our notion of the different deſires, and accordingly rank their followers. 'Tis true, as charity is eſteemed a conjunction of the good qualities neceſſary to a virtuous man; ſo love is the happy compoſition of all the accompliſhments that make a fine gentleman. The motive of a man's life is ſeen in all his actions; and ſuch as have the beauteous boy for their inſpirer, have a ſimplicity of behaviour, and a certain evenneſs of deſire, which burns like the lamp of life in their boſoms; while they who are inſtigated by the ſatyr, are ever tortured by jealouſies of the object of their wiſhes, often deſire what they ſcorn, and as often conſciouſly and knowingly embrace where they are mutually indifferent. He certainly does not underſtand either vice

or virtue, who will not allow that life, without the rules of morality, is a wayward uneaſy being, with ſnatches only of pleaſure; but under the regulation of virtue, a reaſonable and uniform habit of enjoyment. Cupid would not loſe his divinity, if too many of his votaries did not take their direction from the ſatyr; but the generality of lovers are of that vile and degenerate ſtamp, that it forces us to conclude with Phocylides.

Οὐ γὰρ ἔρως ἐσι, πάθος δ' ἀϊδηλον ἀπάντων,

that 'love is no god, but a blind paſſion, to which all 'are ſubject:' it is a too common levity in youth, to make love an exerciſe or recreation: when the hours of life hang heavy on their hands, they are for whining them away with Phillis, or Silvia; the nymph hears, and ſmiles at the tender things they utter, is pleaſed at the raptures ſhe imagines her beauty has inſpired, is tranſported at being compared to a goddeſs, diſſolves to ſoftneſs, and looks upon the amorous flatterer as one who will adore her to the end of her life. And what is the conſequence of all this paſſion? She is only courted perhaps to be betrayed; all the fine things that are ſaid, prove but extempore and accidental; imply no real deſire, no deſign, except of making the female fond of herſelf, and working her into the toil that is ſet for her honour. Or ſuppoſing the gallant proceeds with more loyalty, that he views her as an object in which he propoſes happineſs and joy; that he conſents to take her to his arms for life; 'tis ten to one, if fruition do not alter his opinion of her charms, if his appetite do not grow dull with the feaſt, and his fancy and affections begin to covet a new object. The truth is, we generally make love in a ſtile, and with ſentiments very unfit for ordinary life; they are half theatrical, half romantic. By this means we raiſe our imaginations to what is not to be expected in human life and becauſe we did not before-hand think of the creature we were enamoured of,

of, as ſubject to diſhonour, age, ſickneſs, impatience, or ſullenneſs, but altogether conſidered her as the object of joy, human nature itſelf is often imputed to her, as her particular imperfection or defect: whereas we ſhould conſider things in their right light, and as nature has formed them, and not as our own fancies or appetites would have them.

Love was always accounted the mother of poetry; and ſtill produces among the moſt ignorant and barbarous, a thouſand imaginary diſtreſſes and poetical complaints. It makes even a lacquey talk like Oroondates, and converts a brutal ruſtic into a gentle ſwain. The moſt ordinary plebeian or mechanic in love, bleeds and pines away with a certain elegance and tenderneſs of ſentiments which this paſſion naturally inſpires. Theſe inward languiſhings of the mind, infected with this ſoftneſs, hath given birth to a phraſe, which is made uſe of by all the melting tribe, from the higheſt to the loweſt; I mean that of dying for love.

Romances, which owe their very being to this paſſion, are full of theſe metaphorical deaths. Heroes, and heroines, knights, ſquires, and damſels, are all of them in a dying condition! Many of the poets, to deſcribe the execution which is done by this paſſion, repreſent the fair ſex as baſiliſks, that deſtroy with their eyes: and Mr. Cowley has, with great juſtneſs of thought, compared a beautiful woman to a Porcupine, that ſends an arrow from every part.

There is no way ſo effectual for the cure of this general infirmity, as a man's reflecting upon the motives that produce it. When the paſſion proceeds from the ſenſe of any virtue or perfection in the perſon beloved, I would by no means diſcourage it; but if a man conſiders that all his heavy complaints of wounds and deaths riſe from ſome little affectations of coquetry, which are improved into darts by his own fond imaginations, the very laying before himſelf the cauſe of this diſtemper, may be ſufficient to effect the cure of it.

It is one of the greateſt faults of too juvenile a paſſion, that the miſtreſs is more adored than loved, and rather worſhip'd as an idol, than courted as a mortal beauty. She is accoſted in the language proper to the deity; 'Life and death are in her power; joys of 'heaven, and pains of hell, are at her diſpoſal: pa-'radiſe is in her arms; and eternity in every moment 'that you are preſent with her; raptures, tranſports, 'and extacies,' are the rewards which ſhe confers; ſighs and tears, prayers and broken hearts, are the offerings which are paid to her: her ſmiles make men happy; and her frowns drive them to deſpair.

I grant, the pleaſanteſt part of a man's life generally is that which paſſes in courtſhip, provided his paſſion be ſincere, and the party beloved kind with diſcretion: love, deſire, hope, all the pleaſing motions of the ſoul, riſe in the purſuit. It is eaſier, however, for an artful man, who is not in love, to perſuade his miſtreſs he has a paſſion for her, and to ſucceed in his purſuits, than for one who loves with the greateſt violence. True love hath ten thouſand griefs, impatiences, and reſentments, that render a man unamiable in the eyes of the perſon whoſe affections he ſollicits: beſides, that it ſinks his figure, gives him fears, apprehenſions, and poorneſs of ſpirit, and often makes him appear ridiculous, where he has a mind to recommend himſelf.

There is one particular occaſion of unhappy marriages, which, though very common, is not very much attended to. What I mean is this: every man in the time of courtſhip, and in the firſt entrance of marriage, puts on a behaviour like a holiday ſuit, which is to laſt no longer than till he is ſettled in the poſſeſſion of his miſtreſs. He reſigns his inclinations and underſtanding to her humour and opinion: he neither loves nor hates; nor talks, nor thinks, in contradiction to her: he is controuled by a nod, mortified by a frown, and tranſported by a ſmile. The poor young lady falls in love with this ſupple creature, and expects of him the ſame behaviour for life. In a little time

time ſhe finds that he has a will of his own; that he pretends to diſlike what ſhe approves; and that inſtead of treating her like a goddeſs, he ſcarce uſes her like a woman. What ſtill makes the misfortnne worſe, we generally find the moſt abject flatterers degenerate into the greateſt tyrants.

To diſcourſe on this paſſion in its full extent, to examine all its cauſes and effects, its influence and power, and its various ways and degrees of actuating, were to ſwell this treatiſe on love to the bulk of a volume. I ſhall therefore cloſe this ſubject with a reproof to thoſe knight-errants in the world, who, quite contrary to thoſe in romance, are perpetually ſeeking adventures to bring virgins into diſtreſs, and to ruin innocence. When men of rank and figure paſs away their lives in theſe criminal purſuits and practices, they ought to conſider, that they render themſelves more vile and deſpicable than any innocent man can be, whatever low ſtation his fortune or birth have placed him in. To bring ſorrow, confuſion, and infamy into a family, to wound the heart of a tender parent, and ſtain to life a poor deluded young woman with a diſhonour that can never be wiped off, are circumſtances, one would think, ſufficient to check the moſt violent paſſion, in a heart which has the leaſt tincture of pity and good-nature.

And yet ſo corrupt are the faſhions and principles of the age, that facts of this nature are conſidered but as flights of gallantry and ſprightlineſs. We are come up to ſuch an extraordinary pitch of politeneſs, that the affectation of being gay and in faſhion, has very near eaten up our good ſenſe and our religion. Is there any thing ſo juſt, as that mode and gallantry ſhould be built upon exerting ourſelves in what is proper and agreeable to the inſtitutions of juſtice and piety among us? And yet is there any thing more common, than to run in perfect contradiction to them? All which is ſupported by no other pretenſions, than that it is done with what we call a good grace.

Nothing ought to be held laudable or becoming, but what nature itſelf ſhould prompt us to think ſo: nor is there any evil under the ſun ſo great as the abuſe of underſtanding; and yet there is no one vice more common. It has diffuſed itſelf through all degrees and qualities of mankind; and there is hardly that perſon to be found, who is not more concerned for the reputation of wit and ſenſe, than honeſty and virtue.

Thoſe errors of life which owe their riſe particularly to what we call gallantry, are often of a more pernicious kind, than thoſe we commit from a ſpirit of libertiniſm. The rake, who, without ſenſe of character or decency, wallows and ranges in common houſes, is guilty no further than of proſtituting himſelf, and expoſing his health to diſeaſes: but the man of gallantry cannot purſue his pleaſures without treachery to ſome man he ought to love, and making deſpicable the woman he admires. To live in continual deceit, to reflect upon the diſhonour you do ſome huſband, father, or brother, who does not deſerve this of you, and whom you would deſtroy, did you know they did the like towards you, are circumſtances which pall the appetite, and give a man of any ſenſe of honour very painful mortification. What more need be ſaid againſt a gentleman's delight, than that he himſelf thinks himſelf a baſe man in purſuing it? When it is thoroughly conſidered, he gives up his very being as a man of integrity, who commences a gallant.

There are ſcarce any actions beneath a man of common good morals, which do not make a part in the compoſition of a bright man of gallantry, who goes on in a conſtant purſuit of criminal ſatisfactions. In the account of faſhion and cuſtom, it is but giving ones ſelf a genteel air, to get immoderately drunk, and break a drawer's head; to quarrel with a watchman, draw the ſword on a paſſenger, and enter on perpetual riots and intemperance. The affectation of theſe airs and freedoms of action, inſenſibly grow into habitual diſſoluteneſs; and then the perſon who ſets

ſets out a gallant, finiſhes his courſe in a complete rake. Thoſe actions which we are driven into, generally through the heat of wine or youth, Mr. Hobbs calls the 'effects of a natural drunkenneſs,' and that therefore we are conſequently more excuſable for any errors committed during the deprivation or ſuſpenſion of our reaſon, than in the poſſeſſion of it. I am am afraid we cannot have the benefit of this excuſe for our extravagances of gallantry: we are drawn into them barely by our will; we are fond of hazarding our characters by flights borrowed from others; we are forced by no neceſſity on committing them; and have no impulſe to them but vanity, and a diſpoſition of fluttering and foppery. It is unaccountable to conceive, that men who have had a liberal education, and have a good foundation of ſenſe and underſtanding; who know that reaſon ſhould be the meaſure of their conduct, and ſtandard of their actions, ſhould ſuffer themſelves ſo far to be ſwayed by levity, as to forfeit all pretences to modeſty and diſcretion, merely out of a humour of being faſhionably gay, and an affectation of miſtaken gallantry.

I would as ſoon profeſs the character of a rake, as like to be diſtinguiſhed for a man of gallantry; and yet a rake is a man always to be pitied; and, if he lives, is one day certainly reclaimed: for his faults proceed not from choice or inclination, but from ſtrong paſſions and appetites, which are in youth too violent for the curb of reaſon, good ſenſe, good manners, and good nature. He is a poor unwieldly wretch that commits faults out of the redundance of his good qualities: his deſires run away with him through the ſtrength and force of a lively imagination, which hurries him on to unlawful pleaſures, before reaſon has power to come in to his reſcue. There is not a being under the ſun ſo miſerable as this: he goes on in a purſuit he himſelf diſapproves; and has no enjoyment, but what is followed by remorſe; no relief from remorſe, but the repetition of his crime.

This is the character of a rake; and every man of thorough gallantry is a zealous pretender to it. We ſhould labour to aſſume no gallantry, but that of ſpirit, which is ſtiled magnanimity and greatneſs of ſoul; an air of doing great and good offices; a pleaſure in exerciſing our virtues, and drawing them out to light for the ſervice of mankind. This is gallantry, this is elegance of action; and the other, only called ſo by faſhion and folly, is but a poor and mean imitation of vice in diſguiſe.

COURAGE AND HONOUR.

COURAGE and honour are two qualities very eſſential to our characters in the world, yet often miſtaken by the conſtructions which are put upon them. The former is a quality which we have from nature; the latter is to be acquired and cheriſhed by rule and diſcipline.

I ſhall conſider honour as two-fold; as a fortitude of ſoul, and an inclination to honeſty: in the latter ſenſe, it ſtands for juſtice, fair dealing, and uprightneſs of actions. The old academics laid it down for a principle, that when profit and juſtice came to a competition, the latter ſhould always carry it. This did not ſatisfy Tully: he has ſtated the caſe higher, and determined, 'That every thing that was honeſt, 'was for a man's intereſt; and that nothing unjuſt 'could poſſibly be ſerviceable.' Juſtice is the cement of the world: all ſocieties ſtand upon this baſis; and therefore fraud and violence are every-where puniſhed. No advantage can countervail the loſs of honeſty: he that diſpenſes with juſtice and clear dealing, degrades himſelf to a brute, though he does not go upon all-four: for what ſignifies the diverſity of ſhape,

when the qualities are the ſame? In ſhort, honeſty is the ſupport of commerce; and even knaves would be undone without it.

'To do as we would be done by,' our bleſſed Saviour tells us, is 'the law and the prophets;' that is, it contains the ſenſe, includes the compaſs, and obliges to the ſame moral duties which they do. The meaning of honeſty may be eaſily known, if a man is but willing to be informed. To acquit ourſelves fairly in this matter, there is generally required no great reach of thought, no refined underſtanding, no advantage of education. We need not turn over the pandects, nor tire ourſelves with ſtatutes and reports: it was the diſhoneſty, more than the weakneſs of mankind, which occaſioned theſe volumes. Did not deſigning men make it their buſineſs to ſtart ambiguities, to entangle property, and lay in wait to deceive, moſt people might be their own lawyers. If in doubtful caſes they would aſk their reaſon a few queſtions, and try their uſage of their neighbours upon themſelves, the world would ſeldom have any juſt ground to complain of them.

Was this rule generally obſerved, did people 'do as they would be done by,' the world would have quite another face. What inviolable friendſhip might we then expect? What exactneſs in commerce? What eaſineſs in converſation? Want would be in a great meaſure removed, and envy thrown out of ſociety. The poor would not ſteal from the rich; nor the rich ſtarve the poor. There would be no ſuch thing as fraud and oppreſſion; no ſecret miſchiefs, or open barbarities: no ſallies of ambition, no graſping at forbidden greatneſs, to diſturb the world. What largeneſs of mind, what harmony of humours, what peace in families and kingdoms would this one maxim produce? Upon this principle public quarrels would be eaſily reconciled: there would be 'no leading into 'captivity, no complaining in our ſtreets:' men might then 'beat their ſwords into plow-ſhares, and their 'ſpears into pruning-hooks. Nation would not riſe

'againſt

'againſt nation, neither would they learn war any 'more;' but juſtice would run down like water, and righteouſneſs like a mighty ſtream.

To define a man who is rightly honeſt, is to ſpeak of one who looks not to what he might do, but what he ſhould. Juſtice is his faſt guide, and the ſecond law of his actions is expedience. He had rather complain than offend; and hates offence more for the indignity of it than the danger. He hath but one heart; and that lies open to ſight: and were it not for diſcretion, he never thinks aught whereof he would avoid a witneſs. All his dealings are ſquare and above-board; he diſcovers the fault of what he would ſell; reſtores the over-ſeen gain of a falſe reckoning; and eſteems a bribe venomous, though it comes gilded over with the colour of gratuity. His cheeks are never ſtained with the bluſhes of recantation; nor does his tongue faulter to make good a lye, with the ſecret gloſſes of double or reſerved ſenſes. His ear is the ſanctuary of his abſent friend's name, of his preſent friend's ſecret; neither of them can miſcarry in his truſt. His fair conditions are without diſſembling, and he loves actions above words; hates falſhood worſe than death; is a faithful client of truth, and no man's enemy; it is doubtful, whether he is more another man's friend, or his own; and, to conclude his commendation, if there were no heaven, yet would he be virtuous.

Thus far have I treated of honour, as it is honeſty; and I muſt now conſider it under that other denomination. Every principle that is a motive to good actions ought to be encouraged, ſince men are of ſo different a make, that the ſame principle does not work equally upon all minds. What ſome men are prompted to by conſcience, duty, or religion, which are only different names for the ſame thing, others are prompted to by honour.

The ſenſe of honour is of ſo fine and delicate a nature, that it is only to be met with in minds which are naturally noble; or in ſuch as have been cultivated by great examples, or a refined education.

True honour, though it be a different principle from religion, is that which produces the ſame effects. The lines of action, though drawn from different parts, terminate in the ſame point: religion embraces virtue, as it is enjoined by the laws of God: honour, as it is graceful and ornamental to human nature. The religious man fears, the man of honour ſcorns to do an ill action: the latter conſiders vice as ſomething that is beneath him; the other as ſomething that is offenſive to the divine Being; the one, as what is unbecoming, the other, as what is forbidden. Thus Seneca ſpeaks in the natural and genuine language of a man of honour, when he declares, 'That were there 'no God to ſee or puniſh vice, he would not commit 'it; becauſe it is of ſo mean, ſo baſe, and ſo vile a 'nature.'

There are perſons who treat this principle as chimerical, and turn it into ridicule. Men who are profeſſedly of no honour, are of a more profligate and abandoned nature, than even thoſe who are acted by falſe notions of it; as there is more hopes of a heretic, than of an atheiſt. Theſe ſons of infamy conſider honour as a fine imaginary notion, that leads aſtray young experienced men, and draws them into real miſchiefs, whilſt they are engaged in the purſuits of a ſhadow. Theſe are generally perſons, who, in Shakeſpear's phraſe, are 'worn and hackney'd in the ways 'of men;' whoſe imaginations are grown callous, and have loſt all thoſe delicate ſentiments which are natural to minds that are innocent and undepraved. Such old battered miſcreants ridicule every thing as romantic, that comes in competition with their preſent intereſt; and treat thoſe perſons as viſionaries, who dare ſtand up, in a corrupt age, for what has not its immediate reward joined to it. The talents, intereſt, or experience of ſuch men, make them very often uſeful in all parties, and at all times. But whatever wealth and dignities they may arrive at, they ought to conſider, that every one ſtands as a blot in the annals of his country, who arrives at the temple of

of honour by any other way than through that of virtue.

Honour is a theme whoſe deſcription has employed the pens of the greateſt poets; but none have touched it with that delicacy and elegance as the ingenious lord Hallifax. His verſes ſet it in ſo fair and advantageous a point of light, and give it that beauty, as well as grandeur, that they deſerve a place in the politeſt pages.

Not all the threats, or favours of a crown,
A prince's whiſper, or a tyrant's frown,
Can awe the ſpirit, or allure the mind
Of him who to ſtrict honour is inclin'd.
Tho' all the pomp and pleaſure that does wait
On public places, and affairs of ſtate,
Should fondly court him to be baſe and great;
With even paſſions and with ſettled face,
He would remove the harlot's falſe embrace,
Tho' all the ſtorms and tempeſts ſhould ariſe,
That church-magicians in their cells deviſe,
And from their ſettled baſis nations tear,
He would unmov'd the mighty ruin bear;
Secure in innocence, contemn them all,
And, decently array'd in honour fall.
Honour! that ſpark of the celeſtial fire,
That above nature makes mankind aſpire,
Enobles the rude paſſions of our frame:
With thirſt of glory, and deſire of fame:
The richeſt treaſure of a gen'rous breaſt,
That gives the ſtamp and ſtandard to the reſt.
Wit, ſtrength, and courage, are wild dang'rous force,
Unleſs this ſoften and direct their courſe.
Of honour, men at firſt, like women nice,
Raiſe maiden ſcruples at unpractis'd vice;
Their modeſt nature curbs the ſtruggling flame,
And ſtifles what they wiſh to act with ſhame:
But, once this fence thrown down, when they perceive
That they may taſte forbidden fruit, and live;

They

They ſtop not here their courſe, but ſafely in,
Grow ſtrong, luxuriant, and bold in ſin:
True to no principles, preſs forward ſtill,
And only bound by appetite their will;
Now fawn and flatter while this tide prevails,
But ſhift with every veering blaſt their ſails.
On higher ſprings true men of honour move,
Free is their ſervice, and unbought their love.
When danger calls, and honour leads the way,
With joy they follow, and with pride obey.

True honour is, in a great meaſure, confined to what we, in other words, might term fortitude; a virtue that implies a firmneſs and ſtrength of mind which enables us to do and ſuffer as we ought. It puts us into a condition to maintain our reaſon, to ſtand by our beſt intereſt, and act up to decency and conſcience. It is a vigorous and enterpriſing virtue; and would not be beaten off a brave action by any menaces whatever. When the cauſe is good, fortitude is rather animated, than diſcouraged by difficulty: it riſes upon an oppoſition; and when glory rightly ſtated, when public ſervice, and the benefit of mankind; when theſe colours are diſplayed for invitation, the man of fortitude chuſes the poſt of honour, and ſeeks the faireſt opportunities to diſtinguiſh himſelf.

It is the property of this quality, to be always under the direction of reaſon. A perſon truly brave, never ventures at any thing ill or impoſſible. To be bold in an indefenſible enterprize, is brutiſh impetuoſity, and no part of the credit which belongs to a man. Courage, without conduct and conſcience, is one of the moſt pernicious things in the world; and ſerves only to furniſh people to do miſchief to themſelves and their neighbours.

In truth, it is no new thing to meet with reſolution without juſtice, and to find people daring in unwarrantable undertakings. If mens ſpirits ſunk in proportion to the declenſion of their honeſty, if they could not diſmiſs their conſcience without parting with

with their courage, the peace of ſociety would be wonderfully ſecured.

There are men in the world who owe their courage to infidelity; others to ignorance: ſome fear nothing, becauſe they believe nothing: others are bold, becauſe they are blind. Do but ſurprize their underſtandings, and you may warm their blood, preſcribe their motions, and bring all their paſſions to your pleaſure. He that lets himſelf looſe without a warrantable motive; he that ventures beyond reaſon; and runs great hazards for ſmall returns; has no juſt pretenſions to this virtue: a bold man we call him; but he is far from being a brave one. True courage maintains itſelf without foreign aſſiſtance; needs no ſanguine complexion, or heat of youth, or paſſion; it is made up of more laſting principles, and furniſhed from a better fund than this amounts to: it ſubſiſts upon thought, and grows out of the ſtrength of the mind. Our reſolution muſt be governed by ſuch notions of honour as will endure the touchſtone, and ſtand the teſt of this world, and a better. Thoſe who kindle upon a ſlight provocation, run the utmoſt riſque for a lewd cuſtom, and fight the quarrels of debauchery and pride, fall lamentably ſhort of this quality. To throw away our courage in ſuch ſervice, is a diſmal inſtance of folly and diſtraction: he that leaps from a garret, or drives down a precipice, may put in for a heroe at this rate. But the ſeat of ſolid honour is in a man's own boſom; and no one can want ſupport, who is in poſſeſſion of an honeſt conſcience, but who would ſuffer the reproaches of it for other greatneſs.

There are numbers who entertain very miſtaken notions of honour; and theſe are ſuch as eſtabliſh any thing to themſelves for a point of honour, which is contrary either to the laws of God, or of their country; who think it more honourable to revenge, than to forgive an injury; who make no ſcruple of telling a lye, but would put any man to death who accuſes them of it; who are more careful to guard their reputation

putation by their courage, than by their virtue. True fortitude is indeed ſo becoming in human nature, that he who wants it, ſcarce deſerves the name of a man: but we find ſeveral who ſo much abuſe this notion, that they place the whole idea of honour in a kind of brutal courage: by which means we have had many among us, who have called themſelves men of honour, that would have been a diſgrace to a gibbet. In a word, the man who ſacrifices any duty of a reaſonable creature to a prevailing mode or faſhion, who looks upon any thing as honourable, that is diſpleaſing to his Maker, or deſtructive to ſociety, who thinks himſelf obliged by this principle to the practice of ſome virtues, and not of others, is by no means to be reckoned among true men of honour.

All gallantry and faſhion, one would imagine, ſhould riſe out of the religion and laws of that nation wherein they prevail: but, alas! gay characters and thoſe which lead in the pleaſure and the inclinations of the faſhionable world, are ſuch as are readieſt to practiſe crimes the moſt abhorrent to nature, and contradictory to our faith. A chriſtian and a gentleman, are made inconſiſtent appellations of the ſame perſon: you are not to expect eternal life, if you do not forgive injuries; and your mortal life is uncomfortable, if you are not ready to commit a murder, in reſentment for an affront: for good ſenſe, as well as religion, is ſo utterly baniſhed the world, that men glory in their very paſſions, and purſue trifles with the utmoſt vengeance: ſo little do they know that to forgive is the moſt ardent pitch human nature can arrive at.

When honour is a ſupport to virtuous principles, and runs parallel with the laws of God and our country, it cannot be too much cheriſhed and encouraged: but when the dictates of honour are contrary to thoſe of religion and equity, they are the greateſt depravations of human nature, by giving wrong, ambitious, and falſe ideas of what is good and laudable; and ſhould therefore be exploded by all governments, and driven out, as the bane and plague of human ſociety.

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I cannot diſmiſs this ſubject of falſe honour and miſtaken courage, which has puſhed too many men on duelling and murder, without ſome notice taken of that criminal, but prevailing cuſtom. It is pity but the puniſhment of ſuch miſchievous notions ſhould have in it ſome particular circumſtance of ſhame and infamy, that thoſe who are ſlaves to them, may ſee, that inſtead of advancing their reputations, they lead them to ignominy and diſhonour. Death is not ſufficient to deter men, who make it their glory to deſpiſe it: but if every one that fought a duel, were to ſtand in the pillory, it would quickly leſſen the number of theſe imaginary men of honour, and put an end to ſo abſurd a practice; to a cuſtom which has prevailed only among ſuch as had a nicety in their ſenſe of honour; for it has often happened, that a duel has been fought, to ſave appearance to the world, when both parties have been, in their hearts, in amity and reconciliation to each other.

It is a notorious fault, that faſhion ſhould prevail in contempt of all laws, divine and human; and that it ſhould become a cuſtom for gentlemen, upon ſlight and trivial provocations, to invite each other into the field: there by their own hands, and of their own authority, to decide their controverſies by combat; when thereby, in deſpite of all the precepts of religion, and the rules of right reaſon, the greateſt act of a human mind, forgiveneſs of injuries, is become vile and ſhameful; when thereby, the rules of good ſociety and virtuous converſation are inverted and broken; when thereby the looſe, the vain, and the impudent, inſult the careful, the diſcreet, and the modeſt; when all virtue is ſuppreſſed, and all vice ſupported, in the one act of being capable to dare to the death. It were to be wiſhed that all men of ſenſe would think it worth their while, to reflect upon the dignity of chriſtian virtues: it would poſſibly enlarge their ſouls into ſuch a contempt of what faſhion and prejudice have made honourable, that their duty, inclination, and honour, would tend the ſame way, and make all their

their lives an uniform act of religion and virtue. How ſhall the man who ſhall die by the ſword of pride and wrath, and in contention with his brother, appear before him, at whoſe preſence nature ſhall be in an agony, and the great and glorious bodies of light be obſcured; when the ſun ſhall be darkened, the moon turned into blood, and all the powers of heaven ſhaken; when the heavens themſelves ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements diſſolve with fervent heat; when the earth alſo, and all the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up? What may juſtly damp in our minds the diabolical madneſs, which prompts us to decide our petty animoſities by the hazard of eternity, is, that in that one act, the criminal does not only highly offend, but forces himſelf into the preſence of his Judge: that is certainly his caſe who dies in a duel. I cannot but repeat it: he that dies in a duel knowingly offends God; and in that very action, ruſhes into his offended preſence. Is it poſſible for the heart of man to conceive a more terrible image, than that of a departed ſpirit in this condition? Could we but ſuppoſe it has juſt left the body, and ſtruck with the terrible reflection, that to avoid the laughter of fools, and being the by-word of idiots, it has now precipitated itſelf into the den of dæmons, and the howlings of eternal deſpair; how willingly now would it ſuffer the imputation of fear and cowardiſe, to have one moment left not to tremble in vain.

The concern of declining the infamy of fear, of being branded with cowardiſe in the eye of the world, and the regard to the preſervation of a character of bravery, has urged men on to this act of impious temerity. Duelling is the triumph of the faſhion, and the thing in which it has exerciſed its greateſt tyranny: this cuſtom does not give the coward the liberty to live, and leads him out to be killed by a man of more bravery than himſelf, and makes him fall undiſtinguiſhed from the man of courage: it has entailed honour and renown on an action full of folly and extravagance; has obtained reputation by the preſence of

of kings; and ſometimes has had a ſort of religion to countenance its practice: it decided the innocence of men; and whether accuſations in capital crimes were true or falſe: it was ſo deeply rooted in the opinion of the world, and got ſuch an entire poſſeſſion of the minds of men, that it has been one of the moſt glorious actions of the life of a potent monarch to cure them of this folly. Cuſtom has made it a maxim, that we muſt defend what we call our honour: for to ſuffer under the imputation of cowardiſe, is worſe than being buried alive.

But may it not be replied to thoſe adventurous heroes, what if it was the cuſtom to tilt your heads againſt a poſt for a morning's exerciſe; would you venture the beating out your brains, rather than be unfaſhionable? What if it was the cuſtom for people of condition to betray a truſt; to forſwear a debt, or forge a conveyance; would you follow the precedent, or forfeit their good opinion?

As much a cuſtom as we would make duelling, it is not improved into common law? Therefore if men of honour are too great to be governed by the law, they ſhould be ſo modeſt, as not to plead it for their advantage. The notion of honour is certainly to be taken from the laws and government, and not from any private ſet of people, how valuable ſoever in other reſpects. Duelling, therefore ſhould be a very diſhonourable practice: for when you have given the beſt proof of your ſufficiency, and killed your man, you are ſeized into the hands of juſtice, treated like aſſaſſins, and condemned to die with circumſtances of ignominy. You are not indicted for acquitting yourſelves like gentlemen; but for diſturbing the public peace, and murdering the king's ſubjects. Now, the law never loads a man with reproaches, nor puniſhes him thus coarſely, for doing a handſome action. To be plain, your common fighters are a tribe of murderers by principle, which is ſomething worſe than malice propenſe; becauſe it is ready upon all occaſions, and often acts without any provocation, except the

the vanity of complying with a barbarous cuſtom. As if it was as indifferent a thing to cut a man's throat, or to let it alone, as to wear a broad or narrow-brimed hat; and that theſe little concerns of blood ought to be perfectly governed by the faſhion: and when the barbarity is committed, you have the aſſurance to maintain it, and to argue for the murder againſt law and goſpel.

To have our ſwords ready to execute the orders of every paultry paſſion, to put murder into our creed, and cut throats upon profeſſed principles, is a tragical buſineſs. Beſides that, it is renouncing the public ſenſe in matters of the higheſt importance: it is counting that a noble atchievement, which the laws puniſh as a capital offence. Now to ſet up a notion of honour againſt the government, with ſuch circumſtances as theſe, is of very dangerous conſequence. It is ſuch an affront to the conſtitution, ſuch a deliberate contempt, ſuch an open defiance of authority, as nothing can be more. It makes the laws cheap and ridiculous; the ſolemnities of juſtice of peace a pageantry; the bench a few reverend puppets or ſcaramouches in ſcarlet: and thus by expoſing the adminiſtration, the very foundation of peace and property are ſhaken and ſapped. The methods of killing, and that of highway-men, are alike fair in the eye of juſtice, and the ſame rewards are aſſigned to both. Princes ought to reſent the breach of their laws, and the loſs of their ſubjects, a little more heartily; they ſhould not encourage a practice which inſults their authority, ridicules their miniſters, and keeps up a ſpirit of barbarity throughout the nation.

What an inſufferable pride muſt it be for private men to erect a magiſtracy of their own; to judge and execute in matters of life and death, and to hang and draw within themſelves. If the ſubjects may ſet the laws aſide with ſo little ceremony, and make ſupplimental proviſions at diſcretion, the ſignificancy of government will be unintelligible. If authority may be ſlighted in an inſtance of ſo high a nature, why not in an

an hundred? And when the fences are broken down, impiety will flow in like a torrent.

If all ſubjects ſhould take the ſame liberty as theſe dangerous duelliſts, we ſhould have wild work? If the under ſort of people ſhould take the hint, and practiſe upon it in the inſtance of property? What theſe daring advocates for vengeance alledge in their juſtification is, that particular ſatisfaction for every affront in converſation, cannot be awarded by ſtated laws: the circumſtances are too many to be brought within a rule; the giving the lye or any ſuch indignities, will not allow of a complaint to a magiſtrate, or juridical proſecution; and ſince the government is defective in conſidering the reſpects of honour, they think themſelves privileged to be their own carvers? Theſe at beſt are but pleas of pride and miſtake; the affronts which the laws take no cognizance of, are beneath our obſervation; and ſuch indignities are to be anſwered with contempt, and not revenge. For unauthorized reparations, where the injury is either overlooked by the law, or the injured has no public warrant for repriſals, are by no means defenſible or convenient. Private revenge is moſt dangerous to ſociety; were every man his own magiſtrate, and truſted with the power of puniſhing, there would be ſtrange confuſion in a ſhort time, and the world be ruined by doing juſtice.

If ignorance and ill-nature might condemn and execute at diſcretion, if ſpleen and pride might play without controul, and reſentment make a ſally upon every pretence, the four winds might better be let looſe upon us, than all the paſſions of ſuch a liberty. Beſides that heat and impatience are very ill directors; when the mind is thus clouded with paſſion, it is odds but that a man miſſes his way: when violence hurries on too faſt, and caution does not keep pace with revenge, people generally do themſelves more hurt than the enemy.

Our wearing a ſword, gives us no power of perſonal ſatisfaction; nor are we to take a greater freedom with

with the government than the vulgar: our quality cannot be our excuſe, or bear us out in the uſurped privilege: quite contrary a gentleman is ſuppoſed to be better acquainted with laws than a peaſant; therefore his breaking of them muſt be a greater fault; becauſe it implies more of contempt in the action. Beſides, where the example is of worſe conſequence, the care to check it ſhould be the greater. The influence of men of figure is conſiderable; when they are at the head of an ill cuſtom, they have preſently a train to attend them. The infection ſpreads like lightning; and it is a credit to live counter to reaſon and regularity. Nor is it an allegation of any weight, to ſay, that the cuſtom of duels puts gentlemen upon their good behaviour; or that it is a check upon converſation, and makes it more inoffenſive than it would be otherwiſe: for though miſunderſtandings will happen ſometimes in company, yet the diſorders of converſation may be prevented without ſuch a dangerous expedient: for not to mention religion, a moderate ſhare of prudence and behaviour will do the buſineſs.

There is another ſpecious defence for duelling, which is, that the cuſtom has prevailed for ſeveral ages: but let us remember an objection to this, that there is ſcarcely any extravagance ſo ſingular, as to want a precedent; but cuſtom, without reaſon, is no better than ancient error. If we look back to the old Romans, who were as brave as any people can pretend to be, we ſhall meet with no inſtances of theſe private deciſions. Indeed, there was a ſort of duelling among them, as that of the Horatii and Curatii; of Manlius Torquatus, and the Gaul that challenged the army. But then there was a difference in the perſons and occaſions. Theſe duelliſts were enemies, ſubjects of different princes, and a ſort of fighting repreſentatives, choſen to decide the controverſy of the field. At leaſt, the conteſt was allowed by public authority, and undertaken upon the ſcore of their country. But as for one ſubject's cutting another's throat about private diſputes, they were perfect ſtrangers to theſe methods of

of juſtice. And when Mark Anthony, after the battle of Actium, challenged Auguſtus, he took no further notice of the inſult, than ſending back this anſwer, 'That if Anthony was weary of his life, there were 'other ways of diſpatch beſide fighting him; and for 'his part he ſhould not trouble himſelf to be his exe-'cutioner.'

There is a further varniſh may be put on this execrable cuſtom, that it is fine to ſeem above the impreſſions of fear, and to flaſh in the face of danger. Indeed fortitude is a very valuable quality: but then, as I have already obſerved, it muſt be under the conduct of prudence and juſtice: without this aſſiſtance, the beſt event will prove ruinous, and the victory itſelf a defeat.

To be eaſily penetrated by an injury, is a ſign we want either reaſon to guard, or ſtrength to endure the blow; whereas fortitude and greatneſs of mind, makes a man almoſt invulnerable, fences off the ſtroke, turns the edge of an affront, and ſtupifies the pain. They are generally children, ſick and unfortunate people, that are moſt touchy and reſenting; and who would be fond of ſo ill-deſcended a quality? Beſides, thoſe who are nice and exceptious, are ſoon thrown off their temper; thoſe who can bear, and pardon nothing, lie mightily expoſed. Their ſatisfaction requires ſuch an entire obſequiouſneſs of men and things, that it is impoſſible to laſt long: a word, a look miſmanaged or miſunderſtood, is enough to diſconcert them. They make no allowance for the miſtakes of ignorance, the freedoms of friendſhip, or the rudeneſs of paſſion: but ſally out immediately, without diſtinguiſhing upon circumſtance, or intention, as if every ſlip was unpardonable, and all the reaſon of mankind was obliged to be upon duty, to pleaſe their humour, and gratify their pride.

In a word there is much more honour in contemning injuries, and paſſing them by, than in deciding the controverſy by the ſword, or humouring a ſpleen and vein of revenge. For vindictiveneſs is an uncreditable quality,

lity, argues a little mind, and a defect of generoſity and good nature. Revenge, when improved into habit and inclination, is the temper of a tyrant: 'tis a ſtrong compoſition of pride and cruelty, impatient of the leaſt provocation, and unconcerned at the miſchief of a return.

How much nobler is it, to palliate, than aggravate; to pardon, than reſent? Good nature will teach us to ſtifle our reſentments, to diſſemble the pain, and ſmother the injury, rather than let them break out to the diſturbance of another: a generous perſon will pity that in another, which he will by no means pardon in himſelf. Good nature is willing to make excuſes, and interpret things to the beſt ſenſe; and always drives the reaſons of clemency as far as they will go: it conſiders, that ignorance is often at the head of a fault; that generoſity never goes to the rigour of matters, nor delights in giving pain and puniſhment: is willing to overlook and pity the uneven ſtarts, and miſperformances of life and converſation; backward to expoſtulate and complain, to expoſe defects, or demand reparations.

A ſavage and inhoſpitable diſpoſition, is the moſt unbeloved quality; we ſhould endeavour to ſweeten our humours, and keep the ferment down. I confeſs, the world affords provocations enough, and ſome men deſerve to be mortified; but we may ſee, the 'remedy 'is worſe than the diſeaſe.' We ſhould therefore arm ourſelves with thinking, and keep reaſon upon the guard: we ſhould always look out for the beſt conſtructions, wiſh every body well, pity ignorance, and deſpiſe ill uſage. In a word, true honour is always lodged with juſtice and humanity; and courage muſt be blended with fortitude, and have more in it than force and daring, to make it valuable.

AFFECTA-

AFFECTATION.

AS bad as the world is, we may find, by a ſtrict obſervation upon virtue and vice, that if men appeared no worſe than they really are, there would be much leſs work for reformation than there is, as they order the matter. For they have generally taken up a kind of inverted ambition, and affect even faults and imperfections of which they are innocent.

Mr. Locke has defined affectation to be an aukward and forced imitation of what ſhould be genuine and eaſy, wanting the beauty that accompanies what is natural, becauſe there is always a diſagreement between the outward action and the mind within.

Nature does nothing in vain; the Creator of the univerſe has appointed every thing to a certain uſe and purpoſe, and determined it to a ſettled courſe and ſphere of action, from which if it in the leaſt deviate, it becomes unfit to anſwer thoſe ends for which it was deſigned. It is, I think, pretty plain, that moſt of the abſurdity and ridicule we meet with in the world, is generally owing to the impertinent affectation of excelling in characters men are not fit for, and for which nature never deſigned them. Plain and rough nature, left to itſelf, is much better than an artificial ungracefulneſs, and ſtudied ways of being ill-faſhioned. The want of an accompliſhment, or ſome defect, in our behaviour coming ſhort of the utmoſt gracefulneſs, often eſcapes obſervation and cenſure: but affectation, in any part of our carriage, is lighting up a candle to our defects, and never fails to make us be taken notice of, either as wanting ſenſe, or wanting ſincerity.

It is one part and ſymptom of affectation, when a man would outwardly put on a diſpoſition of mind, which then he really has not, but endeavours, by a forced carriage, to make a ſhew of; yet ſo, that the conſtraint he is under diſcovers itſelf: thus a man affects ſometimes tor appea ſad, merry, or kind, when in truth he is not ſo. Another indication is, when men do not endeavour to make ſhew of diſpoſitions of mind which they have not, but to expreſs thoſe they have by a carriage not ſuited to them. And ſuch in converſation are all conſtrained motions, actions, words, or looks, which, though deſigned to ſhew either their reſpect or civility to the company, or their ſatisfaction and eaſineſs in it, are not yet natural nor genuine marks of the one, or the other, but rather of ſome defect or miſtake within.

Affectation, indeed, is a diſeaſe which breaks out upon us in various kinds: it ſometimes ſhews itſelf in our cloaths and habit, ſometimes in our features and mien of the face, often in our actions and deportment of the body, and too frequently in our words and converſation. Each ſpecies of it ſubjects a man to a proportion of ridicule; but the ſtiffneſs and affected pedantry of expreſſion makes him moſt the object of contempt.

There are many men, and ſome of great ſenſe too, that loſe both the profit and the reputation of good thoughts, by the uncouth manner of expreſſing them. They love to talk in myſtery, and take it for a mark of wiſdom not to be underſtood. They are ſo fond of making themſelves public, that they will rather be ridiculous, than not taken notice of. When the mind grows ſqueamiſh, and comes to a loathing of things that are common, as if they were ſordid, that ſickneſs betrays itſelf in our way of ſpeaking too: for we muſt have new words, new compoſitior ; and it paſſes for an ornament, to borrow from the other tongues, where we may be better furniſhed in our own.

An affectation in writing is equally nauſeous as in expreſſion; in matters of compoſition, we ſhould write,

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as we would ſpeak, with eaſe and freedom; if we put our thoughts in good ſenſe, the matter of ornament we may leave to the orators. 'Yet where we can be elo-'quent,' ſays SENECA, 'without more pains than the 'thing's worth, let us uſe our faculty provided that 'we value ourſelves upon the matter, more than upon 'the words; and apply ourſelves rather to the under-'ſtanding, than the fancy: for as for eſteeming any 'man purely upon the ſcore of his rhetoric' (continues the philoſopher) 'I would as ſoon chooſe a pilot 'for a good head of hair.'

But to ſpeak more immediately of our actions and behaviour: every man has one or more qualities, which may make him uſeful both to himſelf and others: nature never fails of pointing them out; and while the infant continues under her guardianſhip, ſhe brings him on in his way, and then offers herſelf for a guide in what remains of the journey: if he proceeds in that courſe, he can hardly miſcarry: nature makes good her engagements; for as ſhe never promiſes what ſhe is not able to perform, ſo ſhe never fails of performing what ſhe promiſes. But the misfortune is, men deſpiſe what they may be maſters of, and affect what they are not fit for: they reckon themſelves already poſſeſſed of what their genius inclined them to, and ſo bend all their ambition to excel in what is out of their reach: thus they deſtroy the uſe of their natural talents, in the ſame manner as covetous men do their quiet and repoſe; they can enjoy no ſatisfaction in what they have, becauſe of the abſurd inclination they are poſſeſſed with for what they have not.

The great misfortune of theſe affectations is, that men not only loſe a good quality, but alſo contract a bad one; they not only are unfit for what they were deſigned, but aſſign themſelves to what they are unfit for; and inſtead of making a very good figure one way, make a very ridiculous one another. It is to affectation the world owes its whole race of coxcombs: nature in her whole drama never drew ſuch a part: ſhe has ſometimes made a fool; but a coxcomb

is always of a man's own making, by applying his talents otherwiſe than nature deſigned; who ever bears an high reſentment for being put out of her courſe, and never fails of taking her revenge on thoſe that do ſo.

If men would be content to graft upon nature, and aſſiſt her operations, what mighty effects might we expect? For wherever nature deſigns a production, ſhe always diſpoſes ſeed proper for it; which are as abſolutely neceſſary to the formation of any moral or intellectual excellence, as they are to the being and growth of a plant. But oppoſing her tendency in the application of a man's parts, has the ſame ſucceſs as declining from her courſe in the production of vegetables: by the aſſiſtance of art, and an hot bed, we may poſſibly extort an unwilling plant, or an untimely ſallad; but how weak, how taſteleſs and inſipid! All affectations, which endeavour to correct natural defects, and have always the laudable aim of pleaſing, yet always miſs it; and the more they labour to put on gracefulneſs, the farther they are from it. He that will examine wherein that gracefulneſs lies, which always pleaſes, will find it ariſes from that natural coherence which appears between the thing done, and ſuch a temper of mind, as cannot but be approved of as ſuitable to the occaſion.

In a word, could the world be reformed to the obedience of that famed dictate, 'follow nature,' which the oracle of Delphos pronounced to Cicero, when he conſulted what courſe of ſtudies he ſhould purſue, we ſhould ſee almoſt every man as eminent in his proper ſphere, as Tully was in his; and ſhould, in a very ſhort time, find impertinence and affectation baniſhed from the women, and coxcombs and falſe characters from among the men. Imitation of others, without diſcerning what is graceful in them, or what is peculiar to their characters, often makes a great part of our faults. But affectation, of all kinds, whenceſoever it proceeds, is always offenſive; becauſe we naturally hate whatever is counterfeit, and condemn thoſe who have nothing better to recommend themſelves by.

IDLE-

IDLENESS.

SO true to induſtry, and ſo zealous for employment, have wiſe men been in all ages, that they have looked upon idleneſs and inactivity, as crimes of a heinous nature. I remember it is a reflection of old Heſiod:

Τῶ δ' ἐ θεοὶ νεμεσᾶσι καὶ ἀνέρες ὅς κεν ἄεργος.
Ζώῃ, κηφήνεσσι κοθώροι εἴκελος ὁρμήν,
Οἵτε μελισσάων κάμαλον τρύχουσιν ἀεργοι,
Ἔσθοντες.———

'That both God and men are angry at him that lives 'unactive, like drones in an hive, that devour the 'fruit of the bees labour.'

Idleneſs is of ſo general a diſtemper, that a copious treatiſe on this ſubject could not but be of univerſal uſe. There is hardly any one perſon without ſome allay of it; and thouſands ſpend more time in an idle uncertainty, which to begin firſt of two affairs, than would have been ſufficient to have ended them both. The occaſion of this ſeems to be the want of ſome neceſſary employment to put the ſpirits in motion, and awaken them out of their lethargy. Were one's time a little ſtreightned by buſineſs, like water encloſed in its banks, it would have ſome determined courſe; but unleſs it be put into ſome channel, it has no current, but it becomes a deluge, without either uſe or motion.

It has been obſerved by writers of morality, that in order to quicken human induſtry, Providence has ſo contrived it, that our daily food is not to be procured without much pains and labour. The chace of birds and beaſts, the ſeveral arts of fiſhing, with all the different kinds of agriculture, are neceſſary ſcenes of buſineſs, and give employment to the greateſt part of mankind. If we look into the brute creation, we find all its individuals engaged in a painful and laborious way of life, to procure a neceſſary ſubſiſtance for themſelves, or thoſe that grow up under them. The preſervation of their being is the whole buſineſs of it. An idle man is therefore a kind of monſter in the creation. All nature is buſy about him; every animal he ſees reproaches him. Let ſuch a man, who lies as a burthen or dead weight upon the ſpecies, and contributes nothing either to the riches of the commonwealth, or to the maintenance of himſelf and family, conſider that inſtinct with which Providence has endowed the ant, and by which is exhibited an example of induſtry to rational creatures.

Notwithſtanding we are obliged by duty to keep ourſelves in conſtant employ, after the ſame manner as inferior animals are prompted to it by inſtinct, we fall very ſhort of them in this particular. We are here the more inexcuſable, becauſe there is a greater variety of buſineſs to which we may apply ourſelves. Reaſon opens to us a large field of affairs, which other creatures are not capable of: beaſts of prey, and I believe of all other kinds, in their natural ſtate of being, divide their time between action and reſt. They are always at work, or aſleep. In ſhort, their waking hours are wholly taken up in ſeeking after food, or in conſuming it. The human ſpecies only, to the great reproach of our natures, are filled with complaint that the day hangs heavy on them; that they do not know what to do with themſelves; that they are at a loſs how to paſs away their time; with many of the like ſhameful murmurs, which we often find in the mouths of thoſe who are ſtiled rational beings. How monſtrous

ſtrous are ſuch expreſſions amongſt creatures who have the labours of the mind, as well as thoſe of the body, to furniſh them with proper employments; who, beſides the buſineſs of their proper callings and profeſſions, can apply themſelves to the duties of religion, to meditation, to the reading of uſeful books, to diſcourſe: in a word, who may exerciſe themſelves in the unbounded purſuits of knowledge and virtue, and every hour of their lives make themſelves wiſer or better than they were before.

The irregular ſtarts of vicious appetites, are in time deſtroyed by the gratification of them; but a well-ordered life of ſloth, receives daily ſtrength from its continuance. 'I went (ſays Solomon) by the field of 'the ſlothful, and the vineyard of the man void of 'underſtanding; and lo! it was all grown over with 'thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof; 'and the ſtone walls thereof were broken down.' To raiſe the image of this perſon, the ſame author adds, 'The ſlothful man hideth his hand in his boſom, and 'it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.' If there were no future account expected of ſpending our time, the immediate inconvenience that attends a life of idleneſs, ſhould of itſelf be perſwaſion enough to the men of ſenſe to avoid it.

I believe I may ſay, there is more toil, fatigue, and uneaſineſs in ſloth, than can be found in any employment a man will put himſelf upon. When a thoughtful man is once fixed this way, ſplean is the neceſſary conſequence. This directs him inſtantly to the contemplation of his health, or circumſtances, which muſt ever be found extremely bad upon theſe melancholy enquiries. If he has any common buſineſs upon his hands, numberleſs objections ariſe, that make the diſpatch of it impoſſible; and he cries out with Solomon, 'There is a lion in the way, a lion in 'the ſtreets,' that is, there is ſome difficulty or other, which, to his imagination, is as invincible as a lion really would be.

If we would but take the pains to conſider the conſequences of idleneſs, and to how many inconveniences we are ſubject, by an habitual inactivity, our reaſon would prompt us to fly from danger, and take ſhelter under exerciſe and employment: the man that wallows in the bed of idleneſs, is fit to invite temptation: the induſtrious man hath not ſo much leiſure to ſin: the idle hath neither leiſure nor power to avoid it. Exerciſe is not more wholſome for the body, than for the ſoul; the remiſſion whereof breeds matter of diſeaſe in both. The water that hath been heated, ſooneſt freezeth, the moſt active ſpirit ſooneſt tireth with ſlacking: the earth ſtands ſtill, and is all dregs; the heavens ever move, and are pure. We have no reaſon to complain of the abſurdity of work; the toil of action is anſwered by the benefit; if we did leſs, we ſhould ſuffer more. Satan, like an idle companion, if he finds us buſy, flies back and ſees it no time to entertain vain purpoſes with us: we cannot pleaſe him better than by caſting away our work, to hold chat with him; we cannot yield ſo far, and be guiltleſs.

There are indeed but very few who know to be idle, and innocent; or have a reliſh of any pleaſures that are not criminal. Every diverſion they take, is at the expence of ſome one virtue or another; and their very firſt ſtep out of buſineſs, is into vice or folly. A man ſhould endeavour therefore to make the ſphere of his innocent pleaſures as wide as poſſible, that he may retire into them with ſafety, and find in them ſuch a ſatisfaction as a wiſe man would not bluſh to take.

If we look into the behaviour of many whom we daily converſe with, we ſhall find that moſt of their hours are taken up in thoſe three important articles of eating, drinking, and ſleeping. I do not ſuppoſe that a man loſes his time, who is not engaged in public affairs, or in an illuſtrious courſe of action. On the contrary, I believe one may ſpend his hours more agreeably in ſome purſuits which make no figure in the

the world, than in such as are apt to draw upon them the attention of mankind. One may become wiser and better, by several methods of employing one's self in secrecy and silence, and do what is laudable without noise or ostentation.

Bodily exercise is of two kinds: either that which a man submits to for his livelihood; or that which he undergoes for his pleasure. The latter of them generally changes the name of labour for that of exercise; but differs only from ordinary labour, as it rises from another motive. Let us but consider the anatomy of an human body, and we shall discover how absolutely necessary labour is for the right preservation of it. There must be frequent motions and agitations, to mix, digest, and separate the juices contained in it, as well as to clear and to cleanse that infinitude of pipes and strainers, of which it is composed; and to give their solid parts more firm and lasting tones. Labour or exercise ferments the humours, casts them into their proper channels, throws off redundancies, and helps nature in those secret distributions, without which, the body cannot subsist in its vigour, nor the soul act with chearfulness.

Had not exercise been absolutely necessary for our well-being, nature would not have made the body so proper for it, by giving such an activity to the limbs, and such a pliancy to every part, as necessarily produce those compressions, extensions, contortions, dilatations, and all other kinds of motions, that are necessary for its preservation, as I have before observed. And that we might not want inducements to engage us in such an exercise of the body as is proper for its welfare, it is so ordered, that nothing valuable can be procured without it. Not to mention riches and honour, even food and raiment, are not to be come at without the toil of the hands, and sweat of the brows. Providence furnisheth materials, but expects that we should work them up ourselves. The earth must be laboured before it gives its increase; and when it is

forced into its ſeveral products, how many hands muſt they paſs through before they are fit for uſe? Manufactures, trade, and agriculture, naturally employ more than nineteen parts of the ſpecies in twenty: and as for thoſe who are not obliged to labour, by the condition in which they are born, they are more miſerable than the reſt of mankind, unleſs they indulge themſelves in that voluntary labour which goes by the name of exerciſe.

Thoſe who have ſearched into human nature obſerve, that nothing ſo much ſhews the nobleneſs of the ſoul, as that its felicity conſiſts in action. If we look back into the old world, we ſhall find, that all its vigour was owing to exerciſe, ſprightlineſs, and activity: luxury and idleneſs firſt debilitated and impaired the ſtrength of nature. I remember ſome fine lines in a poem of Mr. Dryden's, which are an elegant confirmation of what I have here aſſerted.

The firſt phyſicians by debauch were made;
Exceſs began, and ſloth ſuſtains the trade.
By chace our long-liv'd fathers earn'd their food,
Toil ſtrung the nerves and purify'd the blood:
But we, their ſons, a pamper'd race of men,
Are dwindled down to threeſcore years and ten.
Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
Than ſee the doctor for a nauſeous draught.
The wiſe, for cure, on exerciſe depend,
God never made his work for men to mend.

Yet as neceſſary as action is, and as much a duty as it is on mankind, we, by our behaviour and carriage in the world, ſeem of the ſtamp which Horace complains of,

Nos numerus ſumus & fruges conſumere nati,

'We make up the number of creatures, creeping 'over the ſurface of the earth, and born alone to con-

'ſume

'ſume its produce.' If we look into the bulk of our ſpecies, they are ſuch as are not likely to be remembered a moment after their diſappearance. They leave behind them no traces of their exiſtence, but are forgotten, as though they never had been. I could wiſh, that men, while they are in health, would conſider well the nature of the part they are engaged in, and what figure it will make in the minds of thoſe they leave behind them: whether it was worth coming into the world for? Whether it be ſuitable to a reaſonable being? In ſhort, whether it appears graceful in this life, or will turn to advantage in the next?

Would we give ourſelves the trouble of a little ſelf-examination, we ſhould certainly be cured of that indolence which betrays us, grow ſick of negligence and procraſtination, and rouſe and exert ourſelves to action ſuiting the dignity of our nature. The time we live, ought not to be computed by the number of years, but by the uſe has been made of it: thus it is not the extent of ground, but the yearly rent, which gives the value to the eſtate.

There is nothing now-a-days ſo much avoided, as a ſollicitous improvement of every part of our time: nothing lies upon our hands with ſuch uneaſineſs; nor has there been ſo many devices for any one thing, as to make it ſlide away imperceptibly, and to no purpoſe. We fear the imputations of labour and aſſiduity, diligence and induſtry, have a mechanic report; and employment and application ſavour of drudgery. Theſe prepoſſeſſions make us pleaſed with our ruin: we think lazineſs is a deſireable character; and poſtpone and procraſtinate every intention to buſineſs: to-morrow, is ſtill the fatal time when all is to be rectified: to-morrow comes, it goes, and ſtill we pleaſe ourſelves with the ſhadow, whilſt we loſe the reality: unmindful that the preſent time alone is ours, the future is yet unborn, and the paſt is dead, and can only live (as parents in their children) in the actions it has produced. To conclude: we ſhould labour to make this the rule of our conduct, which Seneca tells Lu-

cilius was his practice. *Id ago, ut mihi inſtar totius vitæ ſit dies quiſque. Nec meherculè tanquàm ultimum rapio: ſed illum ſic aſpicio, tanquàm eſſe vel ultimus poſſit. Ante ſenectutem curavi, ut benè viverem in ſenectute, ut benè morirer: benè autem mori, eſt libenter mori.* 'We 'ſhould order it ſo, that every ſingle day ſhould be 'like our whole lives to us; not to lay hold on it as 'the laſt, but look upon it in a poſſibility of being 'ſuch: to take care before age ſurprizes us, to live 'well; and when age advances to die as well: now, 'to die well, is to die willingly.

ENVY.

ENVY.

ENVY has been defined by Mr. Collier, to be 'a diſpleaſure for ſome ſuppoſed advantage in 'another:' and Plutarch tells us, that envy and hatred are paſſions ſo like each other, that they are often taken for the ſame. Generally, indeed, all the vices are ſo confuſedly twiſted and entangled, that they are not eaſily to be diſtinguiſhed: for as differing diſeaſes of the body agree in many the like cauſes and effects, ſo do the diſturbances of the mind.

Whatſoever reſemblance theſe two paſſions bear to each other, they have ſtill peculiar marks to make them diſtinct. Hatred proceeds from an opinion, that the perſon we deteſt, is evil; and if not generally ſo, yet at leaſt, in particular to us: for they who think themſelves injured, are apt to hate the author of their wrongs; and even thoſe, who upon other than ſelf-reſpects, are reputed injurious, we uſually nauſeate and abhor. But envy has only one ſort of object, the felicity of others; yet by this it becomes infinite, and like an evil or diſeaſed eye, is offended with every thing that is bright.

The object of this paſſion is ſomething deſirable; and though excellency, preciſely conſidered, cannot occaſion diſlike; yet excellency miſplaced, may. The envious believes himſelf eclipſed by the luſtre of his neighbour. It muſt be certainly from this motive, that authors are not conſidered with due regard whilſt alive, though juſtice is done their memory in aſhes.

Virtutem

Virtutem præſentem odimus,
Sublatam ex oculis querimus invidi. HOR.

'Superior wit or excellence in any kind, are re-
'proaches to the character of him that cannot ſtand
'in competition for them; and when his abilities do
'not riſe, he envieth the man for poſſeſſing qualities
'of advantage, which ſeem to ſet his inferiority more
'to view.' The reaſon that we ſcarce ever eſteem a man equal to his merit, till we have loſt him, ſeems to be juſtly touched by Velleius Paterculus, in theſe words, *Præſentia invidiâ, præterita veneratione proſequimur. Et illis nos obrui, his inſtrui credimus.* 'We
'always treat things preſent with envy, things paſt
'with veneration; for we believe ourſelves kept under
'by the former, but inſtructed by the latter.'

Envy muſt be determined a moſt ill-natured vice; it is made up of meanneſs and malice; it wiſhes the force of goodneſs reſtrained, and the meaſure of happineſs abated. It laments over proſperity, and ſickens at the ſight of health. Had this paſſion the governing of the creation, we ſhould have a ſad world of it. How would it infect the air, and darken the ſun; make the ſeas unnavigable, and blaſt the fruits of the earth? How would the face of nature be overcaſt? We ſhould ſee confuſion without ſettlement, madneſs without intervals, and poiſon without antidotes. Could the envious prevail, all noble undertakings would be cruſhed, and invention nipped in the bud. Nothing extraordinary in induſtry, ſenſe, or bravery, would be endured: whatſoever was ſhining, would ſoon be eclipſed: to excel either in art or nature, would be a crime; and none could be ſafe, but the ill and the uſeleſs.

The envious man is in pain upon all occaſions, which ought to give him pleaſure. The reliſh of his life is inverted; and the objects which adminiſter the higheſt ſatisfaction to thoſe who are exempt from this paſſion, give the quickeſt pangs to perſons who are ſubject

ſubject to it. All the perfections of their fellow-creatures are odious; youth, beauty, valour, and wiſdom, are provocations of their diſpleaſure. What a wretched and apoſtate ſtate is this! To be offended with excellence, and hate a man becauſe we approve him! The condition of the envious man is the moſt emphatically miſerable: he is not only incapable of rejoicing in another's merit or ſucceſs, but lives in a world wherein all mankind are in a plot againſt his quiet, by ſtudying their own happineſs and advantage.

It is no ſmall confirmation of the baſeneſs of this paſſion, that the reliefs of the envious man are thoſe little blemiſhes and imperfections, that diſcover themſelves in an illuſtrious character. It is matter of great conſolation to an envious perſon, when a man of known honour does a thing unworthy himſelf; or when any action, which was well executed, upon better information, appears ſo altered in its circumſtances, that the fame of it is divided among many, inſtead of being attributed to one. This is a ſecret ſatisfaction to theſe malignants: the perſon whom before they could not but admire, they fancy is nearer their own condition, as ſoon as his merit is ſhared among others.

There is nothing that more denotes a great mind, than the abhorrence of envy and detraction. That which gives birth to this deteſtable paſſion in a baſe ſoul, produces a generous emulation in better diſpoſitions. Now, emulation is an handſome paſſion; it is enterprizing, but juſt withal; it keeps a man within the terms of honour, and makes the conteſt for glory fair and generous. Here is nothing malevolent and inſidious: the advantage is gained by improvement, not by injury. The man ſtrives to excel; but then it is by raiſing himſelf, not by depreſſing another.

It is an honourable heat, that takes fire at another's excellence, and blazes out into the rivalſhip of his virtues; to give the man we contend with all his merit, and ſtrive fairly to outſhoot him. But envy always wants the ſpirit, as well as the good nature and honour

honour to exert itſelf ſo commendably; and, as if it were conſcious of its own impotence, folds its arms in deſpair, and ſits curſing in a corner: for when envy conquers, it is commonly in the dark, by treachery and undermining, by calumny and detraction. The envious are always ungrateful; they hate a noble temper, though ſhewn upon themſelves. If you oblige them, it is at your peril; they'll fly in the face of a good turn; and outrage where they ought to reward.

Whoſoever will read, and with deliberation weigh the character which the learned biſhop Hall has given us of the envious man, if he has either ſenſe or integrity on his ſide, will utterly deteſt ſo ſordid a paſſion. It may not be amiſs to tranſcribe ſuch part of it as ſeems to be general in the application. 'An envious man (ſays he) feeds on other's evils, and hath 'no diſeaſe, but his neighbour's welfare; whatſoever 'God doth for him, he cannot be happy in com-'pany; and if he were put to chuſe, whether he 'would rather have equals in a common felicity, or 'ſuperiors in miſery, he would demur upon the elec-'tion. You ſhall have him ever enquiring into the 'eſtates of his equals and betters: wherein he is not 'more deſirous to hear all, than loth to hear any 'thing over good; and if juſt report relate aught 'better than he would, he redoubles the queſtion, as 'being hard to believe what he likes not. Whom 'he dares not openly backbite, nor wound with a di-'rect cenſure, he ſtrikes ſmoothly with an over cold 'praiſe; when his equal ſhould riſe to honour, he 'ſtrives againſt it unſeen, and ſuborneth obſtacles: 'but when he ſees his reſiſtance vain, he can give an 'hollow gratulation in preſence, but in ſecret diſpa-'rages that advancement; either the man is unfit for 'the place, or the place for the man. No perſon is 'ſafe from his malignant cenſure; no action from his 'jealous conſtruction.'

Since envy is ſo odious, and every way unlucky; ſince it makes ſo diſagreeable a figure, and does ſo much

much miſchief to itſelf and others, it may not be improper to offer ſomething particular to prevent it.

We ſhould conſider, that Providence has given the leaſt of us more than we can pretend to: if we could make out a title to more privilege, to complain were not unreaſonable; but none can be ſo hardy, as to ſay heaven is in his debt, and owed him a nobler being or ſubſiſtance. We ſhould remember that we are liberally dealt with; and then we ſhould not be troubled to ſee another in a better condition. To conſider that we have more than we deſerve, will help our reaſon to ſilence our murmuring, and make us aſhamed to repine. If we don't over-rate our pretenſions, all will be well: humility diſarms envy, and ſtrikes it dead.

We ſhould endeavour likewiſe to improve our reſpective abilities: men naturally deſire to ſtand fair in the opinion of others; and to have ſomewhat of value to ſupport them in their own thoughts. To be eaſy, a man ſhould examine his genius, exert his ſpirits, and try to make the moſt of himſelf. There are few but may be remarkable in their ſtation; ſo far, at leaſt, as to guard off contempt, and ſecure a moderate repute to themſelves. And thoſe that are good for ſomething themſelves, will be contented that others ſhould be ſo too.

To conclude: let us entertain ſo vile notions of this paſſion, as to think ill of ourſelves for giving it harbour: let us paint it in its worſt colours to our imagination, and ſo we ſhall diſcountenance our opinion of it: let us reflect on it as a compound of impotence and malice; as a quality that will prey on our eaſe and ſatisfaction, diſgrace us to the world, and make us miſerable to ourſelves.

RECREA-

RECREATIONS AND STUDIES.

WE all of us complain of the ſhortneſs of time, ſaith Seneca; und yet have more than we know what to do with. 'Our hours, ſays he, are 'either ſpent in doing nothing at all, or doing no-'thing to the purpoſe, or in doing nothing that we 'ought to do. We are always complaining our days 'are but few, and acting as though there would be no 'end of them. Thus although the whole life is al-'lowed by every one to be ſhort, the ſeveral diviſions 'of it appear long and tedious. We are for lengthen-'ing our ſpan in general, but would fain contract the 'parts of which it is compoſed.'

How acceptable a piece of ſervice would it be to the world, if any one could be happy enough to point out to them certain methods for their filling up the empty ſpaces of life? There are uſeful and innocent diverſions to rub off part of our time, but we are not eaſy to be fixed at them: we are continually wanting an amuſemént: but at a loſs to determine in what recreations it muſt conſiſt. I muſt confeſs, I think it is below reaſonable creatures to be altogether converſant in ſuch diverſions as are merely innocent, and have nothing elſe to recommend them, but that there is no hurt in them.

Pleaſure

Pleaſure and recreation, of one kind or other, are abſolutely neceſſary to relieve our minds and bodies from too conſtant attention and labour. Indeed the uſe of wiſdom ſtands in tempering our pleaſures: there are ſome ſo rigid, or ſo timorous, that they avoid all diverſions, and dare not but abandon lawful delights, for fear of offending. Theſe are hard tutors, if not tyrants to themſelves, whilſt they pretend to a mortified ſtrictneſs, are injurious to their own liberty, and to the liberality of their Maker. We ſhould learn firſt, by a juſt ſurvey, to know the due and lawful bounds of pleaſure; and then beware either to go beyond a known boundary, or in the licence of our deſires, to remove it. When pleaſure is made the chief purſuit of life, a conſtant application to its allurements will naturally root out the force of reaſon and reflection, and ſubſtitute in ther place a general impatience of thought, and a conſtant pruriency of inordinate deſire. He that buys his ſatisfaction at the expence of duty or diſcretion, is ſure to over-purchaſe. When virtue is ſacrificed to appetite, repentance muſt follow; aud that is an uneaſy paſſion. All unwarrantable delights have an ill fare-well; and deſtroy thoſe that are greater. The main reaſon why we have reſtraints clapped upon us, is, becauſe an unbounded liberty would undo us.

Beſides pleaſure, when it is a man's chief purpoſe, diſappoints itſelf; and the conſtant application to it paſls the faculty of enjoying it, though it leaves the ſenſe of our inability for that we wiſh, with a diſreliſh of every thing elſe. There is more fatigue in a round of circulary and continued pleaſures, than in the proſecution of buſineſs and affairs: the enjoyments we purſued, grow ſtale in the poſſeſſion; and when we have run through them, leave us flat and inſipid, ſpent and over-laboured. 'Tis a fair inference from hence, that pleaſure can be only ſo, when purſued with moderation. As far as health is kept up, and melancholy diſcharged by theſe amuſements, they may be tolerable enough within a rule. The end of pleaſure

ſure is to ſupport the offices of life, to relieve the fatigue of buſineſs, to reward a regular action, and encourage the continuance.

I remember Mr. Locke, ſpeaking of recreations, reckons the exerciſe of manual arts under this head; 'and ſays, 'That it has been nothing but the vanity 'and pride of greatneſs and riches, that has brought 'unprofitable and dangerous paſtimes into faſhion, 'and perſuaded people into a belief that the learning, 'or putting their hands to any thing that was uſeful, 'could not be a diverſion fit for a gentleman: for 'that the great men among the ancients, underſtood very well how to reconcile manual labour with affairs of ſtate; and thought it no leſſening to their 'dignity, to make the one the recreation to the 'other.'

I am not about to preſcribe any particular diverſions, ſo they in general be innocent in the object: inclination in every one, muſt be left to its choice. Indeed, when the mind demands relaxation and refreſhment, if we would fill up the vacancies of our leiſure by phyſical direction, it ſhould be in ſome exerciſe of the body which unbends the thought, and confirms the health and ſtrength. But what ſhall we ſay, when every man has a peculiar guſt of pleaſure? The tempers of ſome are ſo ſolid, and their conſtitutions ſo ſedentary, that they cannot reliſh activity, or rough exerciſe; their very diverſions are in a manner contemplative, and bent on ſpeculation; therefore they require amuſements of a more refined nature.

For my own part, I cannot think the looſe hours of life better employed than in the diverſions of the theatre, if our vices do not ſtrike in to marr the intention of the entertainment. There are materials fitted both for pleaſure and improvement. Every ſcene has, or ought to have a moral. Human life may be inſtructed from fictitious characters; and we learn to demean ourſelves in real actions, from ſeeing how others have either ſucceeded or miſcarried in repreſented ones. But of this no more: it may look odd for

for me, in a moral work, to turn advocate for a play-houſe. Though the ſtage might be made a perpetual ſource of the moſt noble and uſeful entertainments, were it under proper regulations.

There are many other uſeful amuſements of life, which one would endeavour to multiply, that one might on all occaſions, have recourſe to ſome things, rather than ſuffer the mind to lie idle, or run a-drift with any paſſion that chances to riſe in it. Nor am I againſt having a gentleman accommodate himſelf to the innocent diverſions in faſhion amongſt thoſe of his age and condition. I am ſo far from having him auſtere and moroſe to that degree, that I would perſuade him to more than ordinary complaiſance for all the gaieties and diverſions of thoſe he converſes with, and to be averſe and teſty in nothing they ſhould deſire of him, that might become a gentleman and an honeſt man.

Indeed, as to the diverſions of cards and dice, however engaging, I muſt declare myſelf for them with abſtinence, and that they are to be uſed with caution. Theſe ſorts of plays are oftener provocatives to avarice and loſs of temper, than mere recreations and innocent amuſements. They are ſo betraying and dangerous in their conſequences, that people ſit down to them rather with the ſpirits of gameſters, than a deſign to while away the vacant hours. They purſue it with as much ardour as they would a hunting-match; and the only difference is, that here they are each other's prey.

Thouſands have been ruined by gaming, ſays Bruyere; and yet they tell you very coldly, they can't live without it. What an excuſe is this? Is there any violent and ſhameful paſſion which may not uſe the ſame language? Would we admit one to ſay, he can't live without murdering, raviſhing, and robbing? Is playing without bounds, without conſideration or intermiſſion, to the total ruin of your adverſary, whilſt tranſported with a deſire of gain, made outrageous by loſſes, and inflamed by avarice, you expoſe on a card

or

or the chance of a dye, your own, your wives, and your childrens fortune; is this allowable? Is this the ſport you cannot live without? Are there not worſe conſequences than theſe often at play? When entirely routed, you are obliged to part with your cloaths, your food, and the proviſion of your family, for this unreaſonable diverſion. There is too much folly and puerility in expoſing one's ſelf to theſe great loſſes. There is but one affliction which is laſting, the loſs of an eſtate: time, which ſweetens all others, ſharpens this; we feel it every moment during the courſe of our lives, that we miſs the fortune we have loſt.

'Tis ſaid of play, that it equals all conditions: but there is often ſuch ſtrange diſproportions, and ſuch vaſt diſtance between this and that condition, that our eyes are ſhocked and offended to ſee ſuch extremities meet together. 'Tis like diſcord in muſic; colours ill-ſorted; words which jar the ear; ſounds and noiſes which make us ſhudder. In a word, 'tis overturning all diſtinction and decency: a jumbling of qualities and degrees together upon the level; and ſorting men of rank, by the privilege of the table, with fellows that are too vile for the moſt menial offices.

But ſetting aſide the regard to equality, and converſation in your own ſphere, we ſhould dread the cuſtom of common gaming, for the paſſions it excites, and the unreaſonable ferments, commotions, and inquietudes, it puts its clients into: becauſe it baniſhes mirth, and the reliſh of ſociety; and ties down the eyes and affections to the concern and eagerneſs of winning. An aſſembly of ſtates, or courts of juſtice in capital caſes, appear not more ſerious and grave, than a table of gameſters playing very high; a melancholy ſeverity reigns in their looks, implacable to one another, and irreconcileable enemies while the meeting laſts; they conſider neither friendſhip, alliances, birth, nor diſtinctions. Chance alone, that blind and wild divinity, preſides over the circle, and decides ſovereignly there on all occaſions: they all adore her by a profound ſilence and attention, which they are not able to

to obſerve elſewhere; and all the paſſions ſeem ſuſpended, to give place only to one. 'I think it is 'very wonderful, ſays the Spectator, to ſee perſons 'of the beſt ſenſe paſſing away a dozen hours toge-'ther, in ſhuffling and dividing a pack of cards, 'with no other converſation but what is made up of 'a few game phraſes, and no other ideas, but thoſe 'of black or red ſpots ranged together in different fi-'gures. Would not a man laugh to hear one of this 'ſpecies complaining that life is ſhort?'

I am not ſurprized, that there are ſo many public gaming-houſes; which are like ſo many ſnares laid for mens avarice, like whirlpools, where the money of private men is ſunk without hopes of return, like rocks, where ſuch as play, are loſt, and daſhed in pieces; that ſharpers have continually their emiſſaries abroad, to learn who comes laden from the country with the price of an eſtate lately ſold; who has got a ſuit at law, which has brought him in a great ſum; whc has been ſucceſsful at play; what heir has leaped into a large inheritance; or what officer will venture his whole caſh on the turn of a card. Cheating, it is true, is a filthy, raſcally trade; but it is an ancient known trade, and practiſed in all times by the men we call profeſſed gameſters; they have a ſign at their doors, and this may be their inſcription, 'Here is 'cheating upon honour;' for, I ſuppoſe, they will not pretend to be unblameable. Every one knows, that to enter, and loſe in their houſes, is one and the ſame thing; but that they ſhould have bubbles enough to make a ſubſiſtance on't, is what I cannot comprehend. But I have treated this head at all the extent I allow, and proceed now to the ſecond ſubject propoſed in this chapter.

Of all the diverſions of life, there is none ſo proper to fill up its empty ſpaces, as the reading of uſeful and entertaining authors: and the beſt employment of our dead unactive hours, is in improvements by ſtudy and purſuits of knowledge. The truth of it is, there is not a ſingle ſcience, or any branch of it, that

that might not furniſh a man with buſineſs for life, though it were much longer than it is; yet this conſideration ſhould not cut us off from our enquiries, or ſtint our diſquiſitions: let us make our inroads as far as we can, and not entirely withdraw our troops, becauſe we cannot be maſters of the whole country. The uſefulneſs of knowledge, and the pleaſure and perfection it gives the mind, ſhould excite our ambition to as many conqueſts as we can make this way. How different is the view of paſt life, in the man who is grown old in knowledge and wiſdom, from that of him who is grown old in ignorance and folly? The latter is like the owner of a barren country, that fills his eye with the proſpect of naked hills and plains, which produced nothing either profitable or ornamental; the other beholds a beautiful and a ſpacious landſkip, divided into delightful gardens, green meadows, fruitful fields; and can ſcarce caſt his eye on a ſingle ſpot of his poſſeſſions, that is not covered with ſome beautiful plant or flower.

I have already ſpoken on the ſubject of reading books, in my chapter on Learning; all I have to add on the occaſion here, is, to adviſe to keep our ſtudies within the compaſs of uſe and utility. There are ſome ſtudies which are only matters of curioſity, and trials of ſkill: others of pleaſure, and of uſe. But ſtill there are many things worth our knowing, perhaps, that were not worth our learning. There are ſome tricks of wit, like ſlights of hand, which amount to no more than the tying of knots only to looſen them again; and it is the very fallacy that pleaſes us; for, ſo ſoon as ever we know how they are done, the ſatisfaction is at an end.

He that duly conſiders the buſineſs of life and death, will find that he has little time to ſpare from that ſtudy; and yet, how we trifle away our hours upon impertinent niceties and cavils! There are impertinent ſtudies, as well as impertinent men. Didymus, the grammarian, wrote four thouſand books, wherein he is much concerned to diſcover where Homer

mer was born; who was Æneas's true mother; and whether Anacreon was the greater whore-maſter or drunkard. A man is never a jot the more learned for this curioſity, but much the more troubleſome: are not thoſe ſpeculations of much more importance, that teach us our duty to providence, to our neighbour, and to ourſelves; to maſter our appetites, and to renounce the world?

Profit and pleaſure are the ends that a rational creature ſhould propoſe to obtain by ſtudy, or, indeed, by any other undertaking. There is no entertainment upon earth more noble and befitting a reaſonable mind, than the peruſal of good authors; or that better qualifies a man to paſs this life with ſatisfaction to himſelf, or advantage to the public. Reading is to the mind, what exerciſe is to the body: as by the one, health is preſerved, ſtrengthened, and invigorated; ſo by the other, virtue (which is the health of the mind) is kept alive, cheriſhed, and confirmed. And yet there is nothing in which men deceive themſelves more ridiculouſly, than in the point of reading; which, as it is commonly practiſed under the notion of improvement, has leſs advantage. The generality of readers, who are pleaſed with wandering over a number of books almoſt at the ſame inſtant; or, if confined to one, who purſue the author with much hurry and impatience to his laſt page, muſt without doubt be allowed to be notable digeſters. This unſettled way of reading, naturally ſeduces us into as undetermined a manner of thinking; which unprofitably fatigues the imagination, when a continued chain of thought would probably produce ineſtimable concluſions. The ſwift diſpatch of common readers, not only eludes the memory, but betrays their apprehenſion; when the turn of thought and expreſſion would inſenſibly grow natural to them, would they but give themſelves time to receive the impreſſion. The common defence of theſe people is, that they have no deſign in reading, but for plea-

ſure; which, I think, ſhould rather ariſe from the reflection and remembrance of what one has read, than from the tranſient ſatisfaction of what one does; and we ſhould be pleaſed proportionably as we are profited.

I cannot conclude this topic of ſtudies, without taking notice, that as books are profitable, and reading an improvement, ſo much more will the reading of our own lives, a ſurvey of our actions, and an inſpection into the diviſion of our time, be an advantage, as it certainly is a duty. The 'Shortneſs of 'of life,' I know, is the complaint both of fools and philoſophers; as if the time we have, were not ſufficient for our duties: but it is with our lives, as with our eſtates: a good huſband makes a little go a great way; whereas, let the revenue of a prince fall into the hand of a prodigal, it is gone in a moment: ſo that the time allotted us, if it were well employed, were abundantly enough to anſwer all the ends and purpoſes of mankind. The truth is, we are more ſolicitous about our dreſs, than our manners; and about the order of our periwigs, than the regularity of our conduct. We live as if we ſhould never die, and without any thought of human frailty: whereas we ſhould do by time, as we do by a torrent, make uſe of it while we may have it; for it will not laſt always. It is the duty of life to prepare ourſelves for death; and there is not an hour we live that does not mind us of our mortality.

That time which is good for nothing elſe, we dedicate to virtue; but it is not enough to philoſophize, when we have nothing elſe to do; we muſt attend wiſdom, even to the neglect of all things elſe, for we are ſo far from having time to ſpare, that the age of the world would be yet too narrow for our buſineſs. There is nothing that we can properly call our own, but our time; and yet every body fools us out of it, that has a mind to it. It is good advice yet, to thoſe who have the world before

fore them, to play the good husband betimes; for it is too late to spare at the bottom, when all is drawn out to the lees: it would be a strong motive to the right disposition of our lives, to consider, that he that is not at leisure many times to live, must, when his fate comes, whether he will, or no, be at leisure to die.

COVETOUSNESS.

THE two great and moſt general principles of action in the breaſt of man are luxury and avarice: the firſt of which has its origin from the love of pleaſure; and the latter from the fear of want. The vice of covetouſneſs is what enters deepeſt into the ſoul of any other; and you may have ſeen men, otherwiſe the moſt agreeable creatures in the world, ſo ſeized with a deſire of being richer, that they ſhall ſtartle at indifferent things, and live in a continual guard and watch over themſelves, from a remote fear of expence. No pious man can be ſo circumſpect in the care of his conſcience, as the covetous man is in that of his pocket.

If a man would preſerve his own ſpirit, and his natural approbation of higher and more worthy purſuits, he could never fall into this littleneſs, but his mind would be ſtill open to honour and virtue, in ſpite of infirmities and relapſes. There is an univerſal defection from the admiration of virtue. Riches and outward ſplendor have taken up the place of it; and no man thinks he is mean, if he is not poor. But, alas! this deſpicable ſpirit debaſes our very being, and makes our paſſions take a new turn from their natural bent.

'The man that would be truly rich,' ſays Seneca, 'muſt not increaſe his fortune, but retrench his appetites. For riches are not only ſuperfluous, but 'mean,

'mean, and little more to the poſſeſſor than to the 'looker-on. Avarice is ſo inſatiable, that it is not 'in the power of liberality to content it; and our 'deſires are ſo boundleſs, that whatever we get, is 'but in the way to getting more without end: and 'ſo long as we are ſollicitous for the increaſe of 'wealth, we loſe the true uſe of it; and ſpend our 'time in putting out, calling in, and paſſing our ac-'counts, without any ſubſtantial benefit, either to the 'world, or to ourſelves.'

Every ſtep that a man makes beyond a moderate and reaſonable proviſion, is taking ſo much from the worthineſs of his own ſpirit; and he that is entirely ſet upon making a fortune, is all that while undoing the man. He muſt grow deaf to the wretched, eſtrange himſelf from the agreeable, learn hardneſs of heart, diſreliſh every thing that is noble, and terminate all in his deſpicable ſelf. Indulgence in any one immoderate deſire or appetite, engroſſes the whole creature, and his life is ſacrificed to that one deſire or appetite; but how much otherwiſe is it with thoſe that preſerve alive in them ſomething that adorns their condition, and ſhews the man, whether a prince, or a beggar, above his fortune?

To proceed to a ſort of definition of this vice, it will be beſt diſcovered in the influences and effects it has on the perſons tainted with it. The man then may be determined to be covetous, who balks any part of his duty, for fear he ſhould grow the poorer, and chuſes rather to ſave his money, than his conſcience: he that denies himſelf the conveniences of life, without either neceſſity or religion; he that is anxious in riches; he that ſets his intereſts above his honour, and values inſignificant gains, which hold no proportion with his fortune.

In his acquiſitions, a covetous man never troubles himſelf with the niceties of morality; his buſineſs is, to ſecure the end, not to diſtinguiſh upon the means. With him, as Juvenal has worded it;

———*Quærenda pecunia primum eſt,*
Virtus poſt nummos.———

A good ſhare of coin is his great and principal ambition; and virtue muſt wait without doors till his avarice is ſatisfied. Let the project be but rich and practicable, and he enquires no further: honour and conſcience are fine things; but they ſeldom fill the pocket. When they will ſerve a turn, and purchaſe any thing, a good manager can counterfeit them; but to be ty'd down to a ſet of notions, is the way to be a beggar. He that reſolves to thrive, won't be diſcouraged by a few hard names. Though reaſon and religion ſhould interpoſe ſometimes, the covetous man can either ſet them aſide, or ſtep over them.

To recount the diſorders of life, the knavery and little practices that flow in upon us from this ſpring, were almoſt infinite. Whence comes all circumvention in commerce? Whence over-reaching, or impoſing on the ignorance or neceſſity of our neighbours? It is nothing, for the generality, but the love of money, which makes the court and the camp, the bar and the pulpit, mean and mercenary: how many truſts are abuſed, wills forged, orphans and widows robbed and ruined, upon this ſcore? Where avarice rules and rages, there is nothing of humanity remaining. Conſcience and covetouſneſs are never to be reconciled; like fire and water, they always deſtroy each other, according to the predominancy of the element.

Now one would think, that he who takes ſo much pains for a fortune, and purchaſes ſo dear, ſhould know how to uſe it: one would think he had refined upon the ſatisfactions of life: one would imagine his appetites were more keen and laſting; his capacity enlarged; and that he could pleaſe himſelf faſter and farther than his neighbours. For why ſhould we put ourſelves

ourſelves to an uncommon trouble, for a common advantage? Or how can anxiety and eaſe ſtand together? He that is always afraid of loſing, has little leiſure to enjoy: beſides, a continual load of cares depreſſes the vigour of the mind, dulls the inclination, and clouds the chearfulneſs of the ſpirits. But, alas! were he never ſo much diſpoſed, he has not the courage to recreate his ſenſes, and reward his induſtry: no, he has more reſpect for his wealth, than to take thoſe freedoms. It is true, he can command the ſight of it, and call it his own too; but with great impropriety of language; for property without application to advantage, is mere cant and notion. But where covetouſneſs governs, the appetite is ty'd up, and nature is put under penance. *Tàm deeſt avaro quod habet, quàm quod non habet*, has always been an axiom on the avaricious: 'He that dares not enjoy, wants that 'which he has, as well as that which he has not.' The increaſe of his fortune is but an addition to his trouble; the more he has, the more he has to take care for; and an aſs is as much enriched by his burden, as ſuch a one is by his eſtate.

Now, after all, wealth does but ſerve to expoſe covetouſneſs, and make it more ridiculous; for what can be a more wretched ſight, than to ſee a man mortify without religion? to ſubmit to ſuch voluntary hardſhips to no purpoſe, and loſe the preſent, without providing for the future? It is a frailty likewiſe, that is its own puniſhment: they are tortured with raging fears of want, and the greateſt abundance is not able to keep them in tolerable humour. Avarice is never without its ſtings: How miſerable is it in the deſire? How miſerable even in the attaining of our ends? For money is a greater torment in the poſſeſſion, than it is in the purſuit? For, fear of loſing it is a great trouble, the loſs of it a greater; and it is made greater yet by opinion.

Avarice then, it is plain, is founded on error and folly; it is a vice of a mean and irrational ſtamp; it ſubjects men to torments from within, and averſion

and general contempt from without. Let us endeavour therefore to baniſh it from our boſom, extirpate the latent ſeeds of it, and plant in their room liberality and kindneſs, generoſity and benevolence. All the actions that flow from theſe ſprings, will fill us with pleaſure, and make us dear to heaven, and acceptable to mankind. It is an an obſervation of Mr. Hobbes, That 'the ſenſe of having communi-'cated ſatisfaction, is naturally delightful:' if this maxim hold, beneficence is ſure to be its own reward: we are certain it is a quality which gives ſatisfaction abroad, and that property entitles it to give delight at home.

The conditions on which we hold the goods of fortune, or rather Providence, ſhould be a circumſtance to wean us from avarice: they are talents which we only are intruſted with from heaven; and we are not to fold them up in a napkin, or lay them in the bowels of the earth, with the miſer. We ſhould conſider ourſelves the ſtewards of the Almighty, and not miſtake the deſign of his kindneſs. If he lend us wherewithal to be communicative, we muſt ſearch out the object, diſtribute his bounty, and propagate bleſſings. If we will not look thus high, to prompt us to good offices, the very ſtate of human nature is a tacit invitation to them: the diſtreſſes of our fellow-creatures ſhould work us to compaſſion: the moſt exalted ſtation is not ſecure; we may be tumbled from the top of grandeur and plenty; and therefore policy ſhould teach us to ſecure a friend in futurity, make a purchaſe of compaſſion before we ſtand in need of it, and have pity and aſſiſtance wait below to receive us, and break our fall.

LYING.

LYING.

HOWEVER coarſe a title this ſection may ſeem to have, as the vice is of ſo mean and contemptible a nature, as not only to be unworthy of a gentleman, but even of an honeſt man, and a diſgrace to a Chriſtian; yet, as by cuſtom and faſhion, it is grown epidemical, as the ſin of it is ſlighted and overlooked, and convenience has made it a current faculty, I think it entitled to a place in my collection; that I ought to ſet its malignity to view, and enter ſome cautions againſt an offence that is a ſtain to our nature.

There is a ſpirit reigns too largely in the world, that ſeems to have an antipathy to truth, and runs from it without intereſt or provocation; that delights to make lying a diverſion, banter companies, and paſs fables for fact. It is a juſt matter of complaint, that ſincerity and plainneſs are out of faſhion, and that our language is running into a lie; that men have almoſt quite perverted the uſe of ſpeech, and made words to ſignify nothing; that the greateſt part of the converſation of mankind is little elſe but driving a trade of diſſimulation; inſomuch that it would make a man heartily ſick and weary of the world, to ſee the little ſincerity that is in uſe and practice in it.

Amongſt too many other inſtances of the great corruption and degeneracy of the age wherein we live, the general want of ſincerity in converſation is none of the leaſt. The world is grown ſo full of diſſimu-

lation and compliments, that mens words are hardly any ſignification of their thoughts: that generous integrity of nature, and honeſty of diſpoſition, which always argues true greatneſs of mind, and is uſually accompanied with undaunted courage and reſolution, is in a great meaſure loſt among us. In truth, it is hard to ſay, whether it ſhould more provoke our contempt, or our pity, to hear what ſolemn expreſſions of reſpect and kindneſs will paſs between men, almoſt upon no occaſion; how great honour and eſteem they will declare for one whom perhaps they never ſaw before; and how entirely they are, all on the ſudden, devoted to his ſervice and intereſt for no reaſon; how infinitely and eternally obliged to him, for no benefit; and how extremely they will be concerned and afflicted for him too, for no cauſe! I know it is ſaid, in juſtification of this hollow kind of converſation, that 'there is no real harm, no deceit, 'in compliment;' but 'the matter is well enough, 'ſo long as we underſtand one another:' *Verba valent ut nummi*, is now the philoſophy; 'Words are like 'money;' and when the current value of them is generally underſtood, no man is cheated by them. How unlike is this to the notions of antiquity, and how repugnant to the tenor of this moral, Ὅτι λόγος ἔργου σκιὰ παρὰ τοῖς σωφρονεστέροις πεπίστευται, 'That 'wiſe men take words for the ſhadows of things.' Indeed, words now-a-days, are ſhadows; but ſuch as have no relation to the ſubſtance.

There is ſo much miſchief and meanneſs in the practice of falſhood, that, methinks, we ſhould hate it above all things. Lying in diſcourſe is a diſagreement between the ſpeech and the mind of the ſpeaker. When one thing is declared, and another meant, and words are no image of thoughts, it makes the marks of ſpeech inſignificant, and the meaning of one man unintelligible to another: this is a breach of the article of commerce, and an invaſion upon the fundamental rights of ſociety. Words, as far as they reach, are deſigned for windows to the breaſt; their buſineſs

buſineſs is to let in the light, and make the mind tranſparent.

St. John, in deciſive language, pronounces, 'That 'no lie is of the truth.' Some commentators would have this relate plainly to falſe doctrine: but St. Auguſtine has laid a great ſtreſs upon this place, and conſtrues it to a general precept againſt lying; upon this ground he concludes all wilful deviations from truth unjuſtifiable. All lyes muſt be breaches upon the divine law, and ſtretches of iniquity; and, to affirm lying warrantable in any caſe, is, upon the matter, to maintain that ſome ſorts of injuſtice are juſt. The ſame father quoted is of opinion, That, 'when one 'thing is ſaid, and another meant,' with an intention to deceive, that expreſſion is, 'a direct lye.' This cuts off the doctrine of equivocation, which is a principle that allows the uſe of ambiguous expreſſions; and thus the hearer takes them in one ſenſe, and the ſpeaker in another. What an expedient is here found for ſliding from the truth, and not coming within the verge of a lye, as they ſuppoſe? And how are theſe equivocations furthered with another piece of ſophiſtry, called mental reſervations? A man may ſwear, according to the tenets of theſe caſuiſts, That he never did a thing which he had certainly done, if he has but the diſcretion to keep theſe proviſo's in his mind, that he did not do it ſuch a day, or before he was born; or by reſerving to himſelf ſome other reſembling circumſtance, which can never be diſcovered by the language of his diſcourſe. What a latitude is this for downright lying, and perjury to boot? What a contrivance to undermine the foundations of truth, and eradicate the very eſſence of ſincerity? I am ſo far from allowing theſe reſerves and pernicious diſguiſes, that I am of opinion a man's countenance may be untrue, as well as his tongue. When the ſigns of affirmation or denying, of aſſent or refuſal, of pleaſure or diſlike, appear counter to our thoughts, this is hanging out falſe colours; it is being one thing without, and another within: a mute may be guilty of

this ſin; for a man may point or look a lye, as well as ſpeak one.

The conſequences of lying are of a fatal nature, and ſtrike deep: to wave inſiſting on the injury it does our ſouls in our future being, it is a quality deſtructive to ſociety. Truth is the band of union, and the baſis of human happineſs. Without this virtue, there is no reliance upon language, no confidence in friendſhip, no ſecurity in promiſes and oaths. If there was nothing but ambiguity and ambuſh in words; if they were made uſe of only to conceal fraud, to evade juſtice, and over-reach the unwary; what fears and jealouſies, what diſtance and diſregard, what diſtruſt and averſion, muſt ſuch practice produce? Nobody can cloſe with a lyar; there is danger in the correſpondence; and more than that, we naturally hate thoſe who make it their buſineſs to deceive us. In ſhort, a lyar is a public nuiſance; he diſheartens belief, makes reality ſuſpected, and one honeſt man a ſtranger to another. For the buſineſs of lying is unfriendly in the deſign; there is commonly circumvention at the bottom. Now what can be more unjuſt and ungenerous, than to play upon the belief of a harmleſs perſon; to make him ſmart for his good opinion, and fare the worſe for thinking me an honeſt man.

It is beſides a mean and a cowardly quality: 'tis altogether unbecoming a perſon of honour. Ariſtotle lays it down for a maxim, 'That a brave man is clear 'in his diſcourſe, and keeps cloſe to truth:' and Plutarch calls lying the 'vice of a ſlave.' The honour of a chriſtian's profeſſion ties him to ſincerity and good faith; he cannot be guilty of lying without remarkable meanneſs, without wronging his relation, and putting ill uſage upon this character. A lyar affects darkneſs and diſguiſe; he has not courage enough to face the light, to report his practice, and diſcover the reality of the caſe.

It is uſually a leading miſchief; 'tis a fertile principle, and contains the ſeeds of various productions; 'tis

'tis the prologue to an unhappy cataſtrophe, and oftentimes the firſt ill quality a ſinner ſets up with. 'Tis ſeldom a ſolitary vice, or a barren misfortune. How often do we ſee people advance from lying to ſtealing, and from theft to murder? Nor need we much wonder at the progreſs of wickedneſs under ſuch encouragement: he that makes no conſcience of a lye, is mightily in danger of farther lengths: they preſume ſtrangely upon the advantage of concealment, they think they have Gyge's ring, and are inviſible to every body; and thus guarded they take their liberty, and move as they pleaſe.

Mr. Locke in his Treatiſe of Education, ſays well, 'That lying is ſo ready and cheap a cover for any 'miſcarriage, and ſo much in faſhion amongſt all 'ſorts of people, that a child can hardly avoid ob'ſerving the uſe is made of it on all occaſions, and 'ſo can ſcarce be kept, without great care, from get'ting into it.' But it is ſo ill a quality, and the mother of ſo many ill ones that ſpawn from it, and take ſhelter under it, that a child ſhould be brought up in the greateſt abhorrence of it imaginable. It ſhould be always (when occaſionally it comes to be mentioned) ſpoke of before him with the utmoſt deteſtation, as a quality ſo wholly inconſiſtent with the name and character of a gentleman, that no body of any credit can bear the imputation of a lye; a mark that is judg'd the utmoſt diſgrace, which debaſes a man to the loweſt degree of a ſhameful meanneſs, and ranks him with the moſt contemptible part of mankind, and the abhorred raſcality; and is not to be endured in any one who would converſe with people of condition, or have any eſteem or reputation in the world.

'When the diſguiſe is broken through, and the 'lyar expoſed, he makes an untoward figure,' ſays Mr. Collier. Now this mortification frequently happens: lying is a very hazardous undertaking; there is danger almoſt in every ſtep, and the ground is as hollow as the man: how many ways are there to draw

draw the curtain, and diſcover the ſcene? Surprize and ſlips of memory, ignorance of the ſubject, ſtarts of paſſion, or unexpected company; any emergency, any unfortunate turn of this kind, is enough to unmaſk the lyar, and drag the impoſture into light. In ſhort, when a lyar is diſcovered, his credit is blown up; he is diſabled for his function, and his buſineſs is at an end. Whatſoever convenience may be thought to be in falſhood and diſſimulation, it is ſoon over; but the inconveniency of it is perpetual, becauſe it brings a man under an everlaſting jealouſy and ſuſpicion; ſo that he is not believed when he ſpeaks truth; nor truſted, when perhaps he means honeſtly: when a man hath once forfeited the reputation of his integrity, he is ſet faſt, and nothing will then ſerve his turn, neither truth nor falſhood. No ſerious air, no ſolemnity of promiſe, no ſtrength of aſſeveration, will procure him any belief: his capacity muſt ſleep, his parts lie upon his hands, and he will find himſelf good for a great many things to little purpoſe.

Lying is moreover a character of contempt: it throws a man out of conſideration, makes him look paltry and little, and forfeit the regard which would otherwiſe belong to him. Well may it ſubject us to contempt and deteſtation, when it is the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of the prince of demons. What is it but falſe ſuggeſtions, wrong reaſoning, and deceitful colours, which give force to his temptations, and bring mankind within his power; therefore thoſe who make uſe of falſhood, and manage by the ſame meaſures, muſt be reckoned in his intereſt; by playing the ſame qualities upon their neighbours, they imitate his temper, applaud his conduct, and advance his kingdom.

Are not theſe conſequences, and ignominious marks of lying, ſufficient to make men deteſt and forſake it? And if we look into its oppoſite, ſincerity, we ſhall find it has charms which ought to engage the whole world to its ſervice. There is ſomething very ſublime,

lime, though very fanciful, in Plato's deſcription of the Supreme Being, 'That truth is his body, and 'light his ſhadow.' According to this definition, there is nothing ſo contradictory to his nature, as error and falſhood. The Platoniſts had ſo juſt a notion of the Almighty's averſion to every thing which is falſe and erroneous, that they look'd upon truth as no leſs neceſſary than virtue, to qualify an human ſoul for the enjoyment of a ſeparate ſtate.

'Truth and reality (ſays a learned archbiſhop of 'our church) have all the advantages of appearance, 'and many more.' If the ſhew of any thing be good for any thing, I am ſure ſincerity is better: for why does any man diſſemble, or ſeem to be that which he is not, but becauſe he thinks it good to have ſuch a quality as he pretends to? For to counterfeit and diſſemble, is to put on the appearance of ſome real excellence. Now, the beſt way in the world for a man to ſeem to be any thing, is really to be that he would ſeem to be. Beſides that, it is many times as troubleſome to make good the pretence of a good quality as to have it; and if a man have it not, it is ten to one but he is diſcovered to want it; and then all his pains and labour to ſeem to have it, are loſt.

It is hard to perſonate and act a part long; for where truth is not at the bottom, nature will always be endeavouring to return, and will peep out and betray herſelf one time or other. Therefore, if any man think it convenient to ſeem good, let him be ſo indeed; and then his goodneſs will appear to every body's ſatisfaction: ſo that upon all accounts, ſincerity is true wiſdom. Particularly, as to the affairs of this world, integrity hath many advantages over all the fine and artificial ways of diſſimulation and deceit; it is much the plainer and eaſier, much the ſafer and more ſecure way of dealing in the world: it has leſs of trouble and difficulty, of entanglement and perplexity, of danger and hazard in it: it is the ſhorteſt and neareſt way to our end, carrying us thither

thither in a ſtraight line, and will hold out and laſt longeſt. The arts of deceit and cunning do continually grow weaker, and leſs effectual, or ſerviceable to them that uſe them: whereas integrity gains ſtrength by uſe; and the more and longer any man practiſeth in it, the greater ſervice it does him, by confirming his reputation, and encouraging thoſe with whom he hath to do, to repoſe the greateſt truſt and confidence in him; which is an unſpeakable advantage in the affairs and buſineſs of life.

Truth is always conſiſtent with itſelf, and needs nothing to help it out; it is always near at hand, ſits upon our lips, and is ready to drop out before we are aware: whereas a lye is troubleſome, and ſets a man's invention on the rack, and one trick needs a great many more to make it good. It is like building upon a falſe foundation, which continually ſtands in need of props to ſhore it up, and proves at laſt more chargeable, than to have raiſed a ſubſtantial building at firſt upon a true and ſolid foundation: for ſincerity is firm and ſubſtantial, and there is nothing hollow and unſound in it; and becauſe it is plain and open, fears no diſcovery: of which the crafty man is always in danger; and when he thinks he walks in the dark, all his pretences are ſo tranſparent, that he that runs may read them: he is the laſt man that finds himſelf to be found out; and whilſt he takes it for granted, that he makes fools of others, he renders himſelf ridiculous.

Add to this, that ſincerity is the moſt compendious wiſdom; and an excellent inſtrument for the ſpeedy diſpatch of buſineſs: it creates confidence in thoſe we have to deal with, ſaves the labour of many enquiries, and brings things to an iſſue in a few words. It is like travelling in a plain beaten road, which commonly brings a man ſooner to his journey's end than by-ways, in which men often loſe themſelves. There is a fine and poetical commendation of truth in the book of Eſdras. 'All the earth called for 'truth, and the heaven bleſſeth it; and all things

'are

'are ſhaken and tremble; neither is there any un-
'juſt thing with it. Truth doth abide, and is ſtrong
'for ever, and liveth and reigneth for ever and ever.
'With her, there is no receiving of perſons, nor dif-
'ference: but ſhe doth the things which are juſt, and
'abſtaineth from unjuſt and wicked things; and all
'men favour her works. Neither is there any unjuſt
'thing in her judgment; and ſhe is the ſtrength and
'the kingdom, and the power, and majeſty of all
'ages.'

To conclude. We ought to keep our private life unexceptionable, to diſcharge the buſineſs of our ſtation, and be in a condition to anſwer a fair queſtion without ſtraining truth. Innocence is without art; and thoſe that are true in life, are true in language. A man thoroughly honeſt, has ſeldom an occaſion for lying. If we but keep up to the meaſures of honour, and the limits of modeſty: if we curb our vanity, and diſmiſs our pride, our truth and ſincerity will be preſerv'd at an eaſy rate, and neither our character lie at ſtake, nor our names be recorded in the regiſter of contempt.

WIT AND HUMOUR.

WIT and HUMOUR are two qualities which recommend ſo highly in converſation, that there are not two men in three to be met with, who do not pretend to the one or the other of them: and yet their pretences, ſeriouſly examined, are either founded on impudence or affectation.

Nothing is ſo much admired, or ſo little underſtood, as wit: no author, that I know of, has written profeſſedly upon it; and as for thoſe who make any mention of it, they only treat on the ſubject as it has accidentally fallen in their way; and that too, in little ſhort reflections, or in general declamatory flouriſhes, without entering into the bottom of the matter. There is nothing more certain, than that every man would be a wit, if he could: but many are diſappointed by nature, and more by wrong apprehenſions of the thing they ſet up for.

'Wit,' ſaith the late biſhop of Rocheſter, in his elegant ſermon againſt the ſcorner, 'as it implies a 'certain uncommon reach and vivacity of thought, is 'an excellent talent, very fit to be employed in the 'ſearch of truth, and very capable of aſſiſting to 'diſcern and embrace it.' I am afraid, very few are ambitious of this ſort of wit, or fond of applying the little ſtock they pretend to, in diſquiſitions of this kind. They rather exerciſe it in railleries on company, in flaſhes of merriment, or ſuch trivial operations as diſgrace and degrade the eſſence of it. I

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am wholly of opinion with a polite author, that 'good-nature is more agreeable in converſation than 'wit, and gives a certain air to the countenance, 'which is more amiable than beauty.' It ſhews virtue in the faireſt light, takes off in ſome meaſure from the deformity of vice, and makes even folly and impertinence ſupportable. It is grown almoſt into a maxim, That good-natur'd men are not always men of the moſt wit. 'Tis pity this obſervation ſhould have any foundation in nature; and I take it to have ſprung from the following reaſons. Firſt, Becauſe ill-nature, among ordinary obſervers, paſſes for wit: a ſpiteful ſaying gratifies ſo many little paſſions in thoſe who hear it, that it generally meets with a good reception: the laugh riſes upon it; and the man who utters it, is looked upon as a ſhrewd ſatyriſt. Another reaſon why the good-natured man may ſometimes bring his wit in queſtion, is, perhaps, becauſe he is apt to be moved with compaſſion for thoſe misfortunes or infirmities which another would turn into ridicule, and by that means gain the reputation of a wit: the ill-natured man, though but of equal parts, gives himſelf a larger field to expatiate in; he expoſes thoſe failings in human nature, which the other would caſt a veil over; laughs at vices, which the other either excuſes or conceals; gives utterance to reflections, which the other ſtifles; falls indifferently upon friends or enemies; expoſes the perſon who has obliged him; and, in ſhort, ſticks at nothing that may eſtabliſh his character of a wit. It is no wonder, therefore, he ſucceeds in it better than a man of humanity; as a perſon, who makes uſe of indirect methods, is more likely to grow rich than the fair trader. Theſe people are the more dreadful, the more they have of what is uſually called wit: for a lively imagination, when it is not governed by a good underſtanding, makes ſuch miſerable havock, both in converſation and buſineſs, that it lays you defenſeleſs, and fearful to throw the leaſt word in its way that may give it new matter for inveteracy.

What

What a miſerable ambition is it in your empty pretenders to excellence, that, to carry on their deſign, they muſt break through all things that other people hold ſacred? Religion and morality are the topics of ridicule; and all they aim at, is, to bring them, as they think, into contempt and raillery. If they thought wit was no way to be uſed, but to the advantage of ſociety, this ſprightlineſs and oſtentation would have a new turn; and the world would expect what they are going to ſay, with ſatisfaction, inſtead of fear: in ſhort, wit is laudable in the man who poſſeſſes it only for the juſt application of it. A bright imagination, while it is ſubſervient to an honeſt and noble ſoul, is a faculty which makes a man juſtly admired by mankind, and furniſhes him with reflections upon his own actions; which adds delicates to the feaſt of a good conſcience. But when wit deſcends to wait upon ſenſual pleaſures, or promote the baſe purpoſes of any paſſion, it is then to be contemned in proportion to its excellence.

I do not know any thing which gives greater diſturbance to converſation, than the falſe notion ſome people have of raillery. It ought certainly to be the firſt point to be aimed at in ſociety, to gain the good will of thoſe with whom you converſe. The way to that is, to ſhew you are well inclined towards them. What then can be more abſurd, than to ſet up for being extremely ſharp and biting, as the term is, in your expreſſions to your familiars. To rally well, it is abſolutely neceſſary, that kindneſs muſt run through all you ſay, and you muſt ever preſerve the character of a friend, to ſupport your pretenſions to be free with a man. It is really monſtrous to ſee how unaccountably it prevails among men, to take the liberty of diſpleaſing each other. One would think ſomntimes, that the contention is, who ſhall be moſt diſagreeable; when, if you enquire into the reaſon, it is only done for exerciſe of wit. The freedoms of the pen are much more pernicious and ſhocking than extempore liberties. There is nothing that more betrays a baſe ungenerous

generous ſpirit, than the giving of ſecret ſtabs to a man's reputation. Lampoons and ſatires, that are written with wit and ſpirit, are like poiſoned darts, which not only inflict a wound, but make it incurable. Humour and ridicule, in the poſſeſſion of an ill-natured man, are dangerous qualifications: but if, beſides the accompliſhments of being witty and ill-natured, the man is vicious into the bargain, he is one of the moſt miſchievous creatures that can enter into a civil ſociety. So pernicious a thing is wit, when it is not tempered with virtue and humanity.

As, therefore, it ſuffers by the mixture of an invidious character, ſo likewiſe it is often obſerved, that wit in an ingenious man is turned into abſurdity, by the meer force of affectation. When a man appears diligent to do juſtice to his fine parts, when his imagination is on the ſtretch, to find out ſomething uncommon, when you ſee him look about for applauſe, diſcover an itching inclination to be commended, and lay traps for a little incenſe, even from thoſe whoſe opinion he values in nothing but his own favour, how do we condemn and deſpiſe the artifice? How meanly do we think of his qualifications? And what diſtaſtes do we take from aſſuming the quality?

A great deal of fire, and a more than ordinary application to ſtudies, ſometimes gives mens converſation a particular turn, and they ſparkle out into falſe wit. They are like young trees ſhooting out into bloſſoms before their time; and, as lapwings, that go from under the wing of their dam with the ſhell on their heads, they run wild. True wit can never dwell with extravagance, but muſt always border on the confines of judgment. If wit is to be meaſured by the circumſtances of time and place, there is no man has generally ſo little of that talent, as he who is a wit by profeſſion: what he ſays, inſtead of riſing from the occaſion, has an occaſion invented to bring it in. Thus, he is new, for no other reaſon, than that he talks like no body elſe; but has taken up a method of

of his own, without commerce or dialogue with other people.

Mr. Locke has an admirable reflection upon the difference of wit and judgment; whereby he endeavours to ſhew the reaſon why they are not always the talents of the ſame perſon. His words are as follow: 'And hence, perhaps, may be given ſome reaſon of 'that common obſervation, That men, who have a 'great deal of wit, and prompt memories, have not 'always the cleareſt judgment, or deepeſt reaſon: 'for wit lying moſt in the aſſemblage of ideas, and 'putting thoſe together with quickneſs and variety, 'wherein can be found any reſemblage or congruity, 'thereby to make up pleaſant pictures and agreeable 'viſions in the fancy. Judgment, on the contrary, 'lies quite on the other ſide; in ſeparating carefully, 'one from another, ideas wherein can be found the 'leaſt difference, thereby to avoid being miſled by 'ſimilitude, and by affinity, to take one thing for 'another. This is a way of proceeding quite con-'trary to metaphor and alluſion; wherein, for the 'moſt part, lies that entertainment and pleaſantry 'of wit, which ſtrikes ſo lively on the fancy, and is 'therefore ſo acceptable to all people.'

This definition of wit and judgment muſt be acknowledged to be very philoſophical: but ſtill it gives us a juſt idea how far our wit may go, and keep its quality; and how eſſential judgment is to its regulation. I ſhall purſue this theme no further, than in a few ſupplemental rules, for the uſe and application of our wit in company. We ſhould endeavour to wear out the vein of pedantry and affectation, to have our ſenſe eſteemed to its merit: we ſhould check in ourſelves all vanities of glittering on the imagination of another with the luſtre of our parts; we ſhould learn to think with the wiſe, but talk with the vulgar; to keep our ſublime notions to ourſelves, and converſe in the common received ſentiments of mankind: to believe, that though nothing ſo much gains upon the

the affections as extempore eloquence, yet that we very rarely meet with any who excel in it; that if we reſolve to pleaſe, we ſhould never ſpeak, to gratify any particular vanity and paſſion of our own, but always with a deſign either to divert or inform the company: that we ſhould talk extremely little of ourſelves, to avoid putting on an air of wiſdom by ſpeaking in proverbs, or deciding controverſies with ſhort ſentences; and to take care to be ſometimes ſilent, on a ſubject where every one is ſatisfied we could ſpeak well; for by this, we ſhall often be thought no leſs knowing in other matters, where, perhaps, we are wholly ignorant. The obſervation of theſe few rules, I am ſatisfied, will ſecure real wit from odium, and eſtabliſh the reputation of an imaginary one, where conduct alone conceals folly,

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True humour muſt always lie under the check of reaſon; and it requires the direction of the niceſt judgment, by ſo much the more, as it indulges itſelf in the moſt boundleſs freedoms. In ſhort, it muſt conſiſt in a pleaſantry derived from nature; in vivacity and mirth without affectation, bounded by truth, and ſupported by good ſenſe. For this reaſon, a coxcomb can never arrive to an humouriſt: he may give himſelf aukward

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aukward and ſtrained airs, run into a length of oddities in behaviour, and pretend to be obſtinate in ſome particulars; yet cannot go out of his own character. It is a very juſt and a common obſervation upon the natives of this iſland, That in their different degrees, and in their ſeveral profeſſions and employments, they abound as much, and, perhaps, more, in good ſenſe, than any people; and yet, at the ſame time, there is ſcarce an Engliſhman, of any life and ſpirit, that has not ſome odd caſt of thought, ſome original humour, that diſtinguiſhes him from his neighbour. This national mark is viſible among us in every rank and degree of men, from the perſons of the firſt quality and politeſt ſenſe, down to the rudeſt and moſt ignorant of the people. Every mechanic has a particular caſt of head, and turn of wit, or ſome uncommon whim, as a characteriſtic that diſtinguiſhes him from others of his trade, as well as from the multitudes that are upon a level with him.

I confeſs, by an agreeable ſingularity of temper, we may furniſh out a perpetual change of entertainment to ourſelves, and diverſify all our converſations with a variety of mirth: but as I would have a gentleman not too conſcious of his wit; ſo neither would I have him ſtrain too hard in purſuit of humour. It often throws people unawares into a form of buffoonery, and runs them into an habitual carriage, that ſavours of pedantry and affectation. We ſhould rather be content to follow nature, and be guided by ſenſe, than endeavour to entertain at the expence of our characters; and chuſe to be conſidered as men of ſound reaſon, rather than be counted prodigies of humour.

DRINKING.

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THERE are many intemperances which we fall into in the courſe of our lives, as it were, without deſign, through complaiſance, or the importunities of company: of this ſort, principally, is DRINKING. We are generally initiated into the ſcience before the liquor is in the leaſt palatable: but we conſent to diſoblige our taſte merely in compliance, 'till by the habitual obſequiouſneſs, we grow to a reliſh of the luxury, and then continue the debauch by inclination.

A method of ſpending one's time agreeably, is a thing ſo little ſtudied, that the common amuſement of our young gentlemen, is drinking. This way of entertainment has cuſtom on its ſide: but as much as it has prevailed, I believe, there have been very few companies, that have been guilty of exceſs this way, where there have not happened more accidents which make againſt, than for the continuance of it.

It is impoſſible to lay down any determinate rule for temperance; becauſe what is luxury in one, may be temperance in another: but there are few of common reaſon who are not judges of their own conſtitutions ſo far, as to know what proportions do beſt agree with them. Were I to preſcribe a rule for drinking, it ſhould be formed upon a ſaying quoted by Sir William Temple: 'The firſt glaſs for myſelf, 'the ſecond for my friends, the third for good-humour,

'and the fourth for my enemies.' To go further into antiquity for a rule, Plutarch tells us, it was the advice of Socrates, to 'beware of ſuch meats as perſuade a man, though he be not hungary, to eat them; and thoſe liquors that would prevail with a man to drink them, when he is not thirſty.' Temperance, indeed, is a grand preſervative, which has thoſe particular advantages above all other means of health, that it may be practiſed by all ranks and conditions, at any ſeaſon, or in any place. It is a kind of regimen, into which every man may put himſelf, without interruption of buſineſs, expence of money, or loſs of time. In a word, if exerciſe throws off ſuperfluities, temperance prevents them, gives nature her full play, and enables her to exert herſelf in all her force and vigour.

Would we not permit ourſelves to conſider temperance as a moral virtue, and that every receding from its dictates, is a ſin againſt our ſouls: yet, if we would only make the loſs of conſtitution a caution, the apparent injury we do to our healths, and the ridicule and conſequences to which ebriety makes men obnoxious, we ſhould never fall into incontinence in drinking. With all a man's reaſon and good ſenſe about him, his tongue is apt to utter things out of meer gaiety of heart, which may diſpleaſe his beſt friends. Who then would truſt himſelf to the power of wine, without ſaying more againſt it, than that 'it raiſes the imagination, and depreſſes the judgment?' Were there only this ſingle conſideration, that we are leſs maſters of ourſelves when we drink in the leaſt proportion above the exigencies of thirſt; I ſay, were this all that could be objected, it were ſufficient to make us abhore this vice.

But the effects are of much more fatality; if we continue to gorge ourſelves with this freedom, and dilute with ſuch profuſion and intemperance, we ſhall find the tone of our ſtomachs weakened, the acids ſpoiled, and our digeſtion good for nothing: and, when we are once diſabled in this faculty, our conſtitution

ſtitution is undermined, and the buſineſs commonly ends in dropſy, or conſumption. The apothecary is perpetually employed to countermine the cook and the vintner. This misfortune in the firſt concoction ruins all; for, unleſs the juices are well prepared in the ſtomach, the blood and ſpirits muſt ſuffer of courſe, the nerves and muſcles relax, and the functions of life lie by and languiſh. How many young people do we ſee miſcarry upon this conduct, and tire upon the road, before the journey is half-reach'd? Men that made a promiſing appearance at firſt, that ſet forward with genius and improvement, have we not ſeen them metamorphoſe themſelves at a tavern, drown their parts, and drink away their ſhape to that degree, as if the witchcrafts of Circe had overtaken them, and the magical draught transformed them to brutes: yet, as if this debaſing of humanity were a duty, and as if it were pleaſant to give way to ſuch a diſguiſe, gentlemen too frequently invite on purpoſe to put the company in this condition. Now, if the invitation was ſent in a letter, and the truth ſpoken out, ſays Mr. Collier, it muſt run in the tenor following: "Sir, if you pleaſe to do me the "favour to dine with me, I ſhall do my beſt to "drink you out of your limbs and ſenſes, to make "you ſay a hundred ſilly things, and play the fool "to purpoſe, if ever you did it in your life. And, "before we part, you ſhall be well prepared to "tumble off your horſe, to diſoblige your coach, "and make your family ſick at the ſight of you: "and all this, for an opportunity of ſhewing, with "how much friendſhip and reſpect, I am your hum-"ble Servant." 'This,' ſays he, 'is often the plain 'Engliſh of an entertainment: and though the kind-'neſs may look ſomething oddly, it is the main drift 'of the matter; the point is purſued, and the conqueſt 'boaſted.'

It is a further argument to the diſcountenancing this ugly frailty, that, as he who drinks but little, is not maſter of himſelf; ſo he who drinks much, is a

ſlave to himſelf. As for my part, I ever eſteemed a drunkard, of all vicious perſons, the moſt vicious: for, if our actions are to be weighed and conſidered according to the intention of them, what can we think of him who puts himſelf into a circumſtance, wherein he can have no intention at all, but incapacitates himſelf for the duties and offices of life, by a ſuſpenſion of all his faculties. If a man conſidered, that he cannot, under the oppreſſion of drink, be a friend, a gentleman, a maſter, or a ſubject; that he has ſo long baniſhed himſelf from all that is dear, and given up all that is ſacred to him, he would even then think of a debauch with horror. But when he looks ſtill farther, and acknowledges, that he is not only expelled out of all the relations of life, but alſo liable to offend againſt them all, what words can expreſs the terror and deteſtation he would have of ſuch a deteſtible vice? And yet he owns all this of himſelf, who ſays, he was drunk laſt night.

There is not certainly an animal upon the face of the earth more miſerable than a ſot: this wretch, like the ſalamander, lives in the midſt of fire; his blood and ſpirits continually boiling with the fumes of his former exceſſes, and receiving a freſh ſupply from his preſent debaucheries. His time is not meaſured by the day or hour, but the bottle; and all his arithmetic is, 'What is to pay, and how much he has 'drunk:' his health, his fortune, and every thing elſe, is divided and ſplit into tavern-bills; and pints and quarts ſtand at the foot of every account he makes up. To behold one of theſe creatures with a bloated face, and a waſted carcaſe, by the aid of a paralytical hand, lifting up a glaſs to his head, that works all the while in the ſame unequal motion, is an object of the utmoſt averſion and contempt. But his pleaſure is the vanity of ſaying, 'He did not ſpill one 'drop of the precious liquor.' Abſurd wretch! And yet, how many of this claſs are to be met with, who work the day, the week, and year round, without any ſeaſon of reſt, or relaxation? The whole calendar

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is turned into holidays with the drunkard, and his jubilee returns with every ſun that riſes. Is it not a pretty diverſion, for two rational creatures to ſit down to murder one another by way of pleaſure, and ſtrive who ſhall go firſt to the grave for the improvement of good fellowſhip?

The conſequences I have yet mentioned, are ſuch as peculiarly regard the conſtitution of the drunkard; give me leave to remark farther, that intemperance is a dangerous companion; it throws people off their guard; betrays them to a great many indecencies, to ruinous paſſions, to diſadvantage in fortune, makes them diſcover ſecrets, drive fooliſh bargains, engage in play, and often ſtagger from the tavern to the ſtews. I don't ſay this is every man's caſe: but the frequency of the miſchief is ſufficient to fright you from the practice. By intemperance, weakneſs is diſcovered, and ill-humour improved. The heat of wine makes the malice creep out, warms the ſnake, and gives vigour to the poiſon. What a miſbehaviour, what outrage, how many murders, may we lay to the charge of this vice? Did not Alexander kill him that ſaved his life, and burn the fineſt city in the world, in a drunken fit? But we need not fetch our proof thus far; for there is ſcarcely any time or place but will afford us too much evidence. Intemperance puts a man out of his own power, makes his folly ungovernable, and lays him at the mercy of almoſt every accident. To be drunk, with ſome people, is next to the firing a train; they break out in flame and thunder, blow up the houſe, and periſh in the ruins.

To be particular in the numerous inconveniences of this vice, were to grow prolix beyond ſufferance; and it may be expected that I ſhould allow ſome advantages reſulting from a generous liquor uſed with temperance. I confeſs, I believe no man drinks wine to allay his thirſt: it ſeems to be deſigned for a loftier indulgence of nature; for it were hard to ſuppoſe that the Author of nature, who impoſed upon her neceſſi-

ties and pains, does not allow her her pleaſures; and we may reckon among the latter, the moderate uſe of the grape. If we keep within certain bounds in our recreation, we do not only not forfeit the title of being our own maſters, but even poſſeſs it in a much greater degree: if a man's expreſſing himſelf upon any ſubject with more life and vivacity, more variety of ideas, more copiouſneſs, more fluently, and more to the purpoſe, argues, that he thinks clearer, ſpeaks more ready, and with greater choice of comprehenſive and ſignificant terms; it bears forcibly to the advantage of this delicious juice, in caſes where it only heightens converſation, and brings to light agreeable talents, which otherwiſe would have lain concealed under the oppreſſion of an unjuſt modeſty: where it ſerves to diſcover the brightneſs of the mind, and the ſtrength of judgment, and inſpires a graceful and becoming mirth: where, I ſay, it awakens the judgment, quickens memory, ripens underſtanding, diſperſes melancholy, chears the heart: in a word, where it reſtores the whole man to himſelf and his friends, without the leaſt pain or indiſpoſition; there it anſwers the end of Providence.

It is certainly a very agreeable change, when we ſee a glaſs raiſe a lifeleſs converſation into all the pleaſures of wit and good humour. While the diſcourſe improves in a well-choſen company, from the addition of ſpirits, which flow from moderate cups, it muſt be acknowledged, that leiſure-time cannot be more agreeably, or, perhaps, more uſefully employed, than at ſuch meetings. But there is a certain prudence in this, and all other circumſtances, which makes right or wrong in the conduct of ordinary life. This obſervation has given me occaſion to reflect upon the ill effects of a vicious modeſty, which has perhaps betrayed both ſexes into as many vices as the moſt abandoned impudence; and is the more inexcuſable to reaſon, becauſe it acts to gratify others, rather than itſelf, and is puniſhed with a kind of remorſe, not only like other vicious habits, when the crime

crime is over, but even at the very time when it is committed. Nothing is more amiable than true modeſty, and nothing is more contemptible than the falſe. The one guards virtue, the other betrays it. True modeſty is aſhamed to do any thing that is repugnant to the rules of right reaſon: falſe modeſty is aſhamed to do any thing that is oppoſite to the humour of the company. It was the ſaying of Brutus, as it is quoted by Plutarch, that 'the perſon has had 'but an ill education, who has not been taught to deny 'any thing.' I have read of an example of this kind, in a modeſt young gentleman, who being invited to an entertainment, though he was not uſed to drink, had not the confidence to refuſe his glaſs in his turn; when on a ſudden he grew ſo fluttered, that he took all the talk of the table in his own hands, abuſed every one of the company, and flung a bottle at the gentleman's head that treated him. If a compliance of this ſort be not faulty, and if we do not injure our reaſon by ſuch compliance, then there is no ſuch thing as a *pudor malus* in nature; no modeſty that can be accounted vicious; nor have we ought to fear, but the imputation of being ſingular. We may fall in with the torrent, and let ourſelves go into every action and diſcourſe, however unjuſtifiable in itſelf, ſo it be in vogue and requeſt of the company. What ridiculous diſpoſition is this in human nature, that men ſhould not be aſhamed of ſpeaking or acting in a diſſolute or irrational manner, but that one who is in their company, ſhould be aſhamed of governing himſelf by the principles of reaſon and virtue! How much more rational and commendable would it be, to follow the pattern ſet us by Xenophanes? This old ſage was ſo far from letting a falſe modeſty lead him into crimes or indiſcretions, that when he was upbraided, and called timorous, becauſe he would not venture his money in a game at dice; 'I confeſs,' ſaid he, 'that I am ex-'ceeding timorous; for I dare not do an ill thing.'

To conclude: whenever we are tempted to regale, we ſhould arm ourſelves with recollection, and be always upon our guard; make a ſtrong reſolution in our defence; that goes a great way in moſt caſes. Let us have a care of a weak compliance, and of being prepoſterouſly good-natured: let us not be over-borne by importunity; never ſurrender to a jeſt, nor make the company maſters of our conſcience; but venture to be ſo moroſe, as to maintain the reaſon of men, and the innocence of Chriſtians. 'Tis no diſgrace to be healthy in a common infection: ſingularity in virtue and diſcretion is a commendation. Let us conſider, beſides the advantages of temperance, how clean and unembarraſſed it keeps the ſenſes, and makes them ſeize the object with more keeneſs and ſatisfaction: how it appears with life in the face, and decorum in the perſon: how it gives us the command of our heads, ſecures our health; and, in a word, preſerves us in a condition both for our buſineſs and recreations.

MARRIAGE

MARRIAGE

AND

CONJUGAL VIRTUES.

I AM very ſenſible I am entering on a ſubject in this chapter, upon which I cannot explain myſelf too fully, nor yet expreſs myſelf with to much reſerve: I am opening a ſcene that repreſents two very different proſpects: the libertine will probably deſpiſe my precepts, and laugh at the unfaſhionable gravity of my theme: the man of morals and ſober conduct will taſte them as he ſhould do, and delight to ſee the huſband regularly painted.

Cicero, treating of the many degrees of human commerce and ſociety, places matrimony in the firſt rank; *prima ſocietas in ipſo eſt conjugio*, ſays he. Marriage is deſcribed as a ſtate capable of the higheſt human felicity, as an inſtitution calculated for a conſtant ſcene of as much delight as our being is capable of: it is the foundation of community, and the chief bond of ſociety: it is, or ought to be, that ſtate of perfect friendſhip, in which there are, according to Pythagoras, Σώματα μὲν δύο, ψυχὴ δὲ μία: 'Two bodies with but one ſoul.' Our countryman Milton, has touched this ſubject with ſo chaſte, ye telegant a pen, that the deſcription, one would think,

muſt confirm the huſband in his happineſs, and reclaim the man of profligate and licentious principles.

Hail, wedded love! myſterious law! true ſource
Of human offspring, ſole propriety
In paradiſe, of all things common elſe.
By thee adult'rous luſt was driven from men
Among the beſtial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reaſon, loyal, juſt, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, ſon, and brother, firſt were known.
Perpetual fountain of domeſtic ſweets,
Whoſe bed is undefil'd, and chaſte pronounc'd,
Preſent or paſt, as ſaints or patriarchs us'd.
Here love his golden ſhafts employs; here lights
His conſtant lamp, and waves his purple wings:
Reigns here, and revels not in the bought ſmile
Of harlots, loveleſs, joyleſs, unendeared,
Caſual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton maſk, or midnight ball;
Or ſerenade, which the ſtarv'd lover ſings
To his proud fair, beſt quitted with diſdain.

This poet has indeed been juſt to its character, and ſets marriage in its proper light: we ought to conſider it as a ſtate of grace, and the firſt ordinance of God to mankind; as a buſineſs of the greateſt importance in life, and a change of conditions we cannot make with too much reverence and deliberation. We ſhould examine our conſtitutions, temper, and honeſty; weigh well if we can be conſtant, and confine our deſires and appetite to one ſole object; we muſt be ſure to call reaſon into our paſſions, and let her inform us why we would marry. For if we take a young lady to our bed, with no other conſideration than the expectation of ſcenes of dalliance, and think of her only as ſhe is to adminiſter to the gratification of deſire; when that deſire once flags, her charms and merit will likewiſe be abated.

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The ſpirit of love has certainly ſomething in it extremely fine; yet if love be any refinement, conjugal love muſt be ſo in a much higher degree. The frivolous affectation of attracting eyes, is there improved into ſolid affection, and ſinks into the heart. The paſſion of love, even where it is moſt ſincere, reſembles too much the flame of a fever; that to a wife is like the vital heat. What a ſenſible pleaſure is there in contemplating the beautiful inſtances of domeſtic life! How is happineſs heightened to the higheſt degree it is capable of, when two perſons, of accompliſhed minds, are not only united in intereſt and affections, but in their taſte of the ſame improvements, pleaſures, and diverſions! When habitual complacency ſweetens their ſatisfaction! When love and tenderneſs ſhine in their countenances! and their words and actions are ſo many teſtimonies of mutual comfort!

Στέργε τεμὲν ἄλοχον. τί γὰρ ἡδύτερον καὶ ἄδειον,
Ἤυταν ἀνδρὶ γυνὴ φρονέῃ φίλα γήραος ἄχρι,
Καὶ πόσις ἦ ἀλόχῳ, μηδ' ἐμπέσῃ ἄνδιχα νεῖκος;

ſays the old poet Phocilides.——Be affectionate to thy wife: for what is more ſweet and commendable, than for the dear conſort to be obliging to her huſband, even till age creeps on their fondneſs: or for the huſband to accord to his wife, and let not diſſentions ariſe between them to interrupt their happineſs? I call to mind one more paſſage in a play of Haywood's, ſo good a compliment of matrimony, ſo fraught with tenderneſs, and the mutual endearments of a happy couple, that the quotation of it, perhaps may make more uſeful impreſſions, than a chapter of maxims and magiſterial counſels.

O marriage! happieſt, eaſieſt, ſafeſt ſtate;
Let debauchees and drunkards ſcorn thy rights,
Who in their nauſeous draughts and luſts, prophane
Both thee and heav'n by whom thou wert ordain'd,

How can the ſavage call it loſs of freedom,
Thus to converſe with, thus to gaze at
A faithful, beauteous friend!
Bluſh not, my fair one, that thy love applauds thee.
Nor be it painful to my wedded wife
That my full heart o'erflows in praiſe of thee.
Thou art by law, by int'reſt, paſſion, mine:
Paſſion and reaſon join in love of thee.
Thus thro' a world of calumny and fraud,
We paſs both unreproach'd, both undeceived;
While in each other's intereſt and happineſs,
We without art all faculties employ,
And all our ſenſes without guilt enjoy.

It is almoſt impoſſible for one perſon to lay down abſolute rules for happineſs in this ſtate, or to determine preciſely in what circumſtances this great bleſſing is particularly lodged. Two perſons who have choſe each other out of all the ſpecies, with deſign to be each other's mutual comfort and entertainment, have in that action bound themſelves to be good-humoured, affable, diſcreet, forgiving, patient, and joyful, with reſpect to each other's frailties and perfections, to the end of their lives: when this union is ſtrictly preſerved, the moſt indifferent circumſtance adminiſters delight; but if every little occaſion of diſguſt is to be viewed with an eye of impatience; if peeviſhneſs and ſpleen are to aggravate imperfections, and the weakneſſes of human nature to be conſidered as crimes; matrimony will ſoon loſe all its felicity; its enjoyments will be ſoured by rude checks; comforts ſink into diſtruſt and ſullenneſs; and kindneſs and connubial careſſes be loſt in a gloom and degree of averſion.

It is not ſufficient (as the Spectator has judiciouſly obſerved) to make a marriage happy, that the humours of two people ſhould be alike; one might inſtance in an hundred, who have not the leaſt ſentiment of love remaining for one another, yet are ſo like in their humours, that if they were not already married, the

the whole world would deſign them for man and wife. A virtuous diſpoſition, a good underſtanding, an agreeable perſon, and an eaſy fortune, are the things which ſhould chiefly be regarded on this occaſion.

Give me leave to conſider the advantages and hazards of this ſtate under theſe four heads; and we ſhall be more ſenſible of the neceſſity and benefit of taking them into our conſideration and conduct.

As to the virtuous diſpoſition, believe me, if that be wanting on either ſide, eaſe and felicity are baniſhed for ever: diſcontent and jealouſy uſurp the breaſt, and lord it over all the milder affections. Nothing has more brought wedlock into contempt and prejudice, and made the ſtate to be looked upon as a bugbear, than the too frequent examples of levity and wantonneſs, that have been the ſtains of every age and country: there have been ſo many that could not make themſelves maſters of their paſſion, and have ſuffered their conſciences to be carried away by the biaſs of a looſe and inordinate affection.

Inconſtancy diſturbs the harmony of life, and breaks the friendſhip of the neareſt relation: what confuſions, what quarrels, what deſtruction of circumſtances, are occaſioned by undecent liberties in wedlock? The ſacred property of marriage is infringed; and no revenge can be too great for ſuch an injury.

Marriage ſhould create a peculiar and incommunicable friendſhip: theſe rights are not to be invaded, nor the quiet of either party to be diſturbed. Even thoſe familiarities which give umbrage, and carry the countenance of deſign, are ill-natured and unjuſt, though they go no farther.

I will not be ſo partial to my own ſex, as not to own it is my opinion, that the matrimonial contract is mutual; and a failure on either ſide is equally a violation of faith, and a breach of the confederacy. The man and woman are under the ſame duties of religion, and obliged by the ſame laws of ſobriety. Indeed the crime of incontinence may admit of ſome difference as to its conſequences, and our ſex may ſin this way with

with leſs fatality. But when a woman proves perfidious, the misfortune is incorporated with the family, the adulterous brood are palmed upon the huſband, and grow up to the inheritance of his eſtate. Now when the man goes aſtray, the wife cannot pretend to ſuch great damages. To be plain, the aggravations on our ſide will very near amount to the ſame injury: may not the extravagance of a ſtrumpet's ſupport, and the charge of educating her baſtard progeny, run out that eſtate which ſhould be the inheritance of a lawful iſſue, and be a canker to the fortune of a virtuous wife, who deſerves, on many accounts, more generous treatment?

If we look back into the puniſhments which the ancients inflicted on the male for incontinence, we ſhall ſee there is no exemption on our ſide; or liberty entailed on us for offending. To mention, but in one inſtance, the law of Solon left the malefactor perfectly at the mercy of him that was injured.

When the man is ſo unhappy as to be of a wandering diſpoſition, the poor injured wife has but an uncomfortable time of it; for thoſe who are libertines abroad, are generally ill-natured at home. The wife then is eſteemed a nuſance; and no ruggedneſs or barbarity is too coarſe for her; or at beſt ſhe is but the lumber of the houſe. The promiſes of courtſhip, and the engagements of marriage, are quite forgotten. The title of reſpect is transferred, and all the breeding and good humour made over to the miſtreſs in keeping. She is made governeſs of the man and the money. Her apartments and her equipage, are all curioſity and expence. She is allowed to make her progreſſes in ſtate, and to travel with her poſtillion; when, it may be, the poor lady who ſhould of right be intitled to his kindneſs and liberality, can hardly compaſs a hackney-coach to remove her from one ſtreet to another. Nor are we to wonder at ſuch inſtances of miſbehaviour and coarſe treatment: He that can diſpenſe with the main articles, will eaſily get over the points of decency. The want of civility may be eaſily

ſily excuſed, in thoſe that break through the moſt ſolemn covenants.

But allowing the man of a conſtitution and principle, that make him keep the matrimonial contract inviolable; it is neceſſary that he conſult ſomething more than his virtue in the diſpoſition of his perſon for life: the lamp of conſtancy will burn but very dim, when the appetite is once cloy'd; when the ſenſual enjoyments are upon the decay, and no charms are ſeen in the bride to blow up the expiring flame of love, and rekindle the abating affection. When we therefore chuſe our companions for life, if we hope to keep both them and ourſelves in good humour to the laſt ſtage of it, we muſt be extremely careful in the choice we make, as well as in the conduct on our own part. When the perſons to whom we join ourſelves can ſtand an examination, and bear the ſcrutiny; when they mend upon our acquaintance with them, and diſcover new beauties the more we ſearch into their characters, our love will naturally riſe in proportion to their perfection. The *forma bonum fragile eſt* of the poet, will never take off from the value and eſtimation of beauty; there muſt be real or fancied charms in the miſtreſs to engage the heart; and when the man has choſe well in this regard, if he be a maſter either of ſenſe or gratitude, he will not ſlight or contemn his wife, becauſe age or accidents of ſickneſs have quenched the fires that firſt inflamed him. He will rather look back, and revive endearments from the recollection of that object, which was the ſoul of his deſire: he will view her with a tenderneſs that confeſſes her power over him, and regard her as the pride of his choice, and ambition of his wiſhes. The raptures he once conceived from her form, will not loſe all their force; but he will be fond of cheriſhing that which was once the ſource of his pleaſure.

Nor are the beauties of the face, the advantages of complexion, the delicacies of ſhape, and attractions of behaviour, the only things to be conſidered in an intended wife, but only as ſo many adjunct qualities to recom-

recommend her to our love. If we would lay a ſcheme for compleat happineſs, let us look carefully into the perfections of her mind; let us examine her wit and capacity; whether her underſtanding will come up to the management we require from her; and whether ſhe be furniſhed with ſenſe and judgment enough to make her a friend, as well as a conſort.

There is ſo much nicety and diſcretion required to keep love alive after marriage, and make converſation ſtill new and agreeable, that good ſenſe ſeems a very eſſential aid to this purpoſe. When the wife proves capable of filling ſerious, as well as joyous hours, ſhe brings happineſs unknown to friendſhip itſelf. She is then ſomething more than a companion at bed and board: paſſion is refined by ſuch ſociety, and gradually aſcends to more exalted pleaſures, than thoſe of enjoyment. Life hangs heavily in the repeated converſation of one, who has no imagination to be fired at the ſeveral occaſions and objects which come before her, or who cannot ſtrike out of her reflections new paths of pleaſing diſcourſe. If ſhe have good humour enough to make her gay, and wit enough to render that gaiety agreeable, the approbation of her words and actions is a continual new feaſt to the huſband; nor can he enough applaud his good fortune in having his life varied every hour: his mind improved by her ideas, and his heart more glad from every circumſtance which they meet with: how does her wit improve his pleaſures, counſel him in emergencies, and add conſolation in the moments of affliction! The mutual paſſion which is grounded on this ſolid foundation, enters into the very conſtitution, and the kindneſs flows as eaſily and ſilently, as the blood in the veins. But when there is no good ſenſe or wiſdom on the woman's ſide, to relieve or comfort againſt the accidents of life, the ſtate ſoon grows irkſome and inſipid; contradiction and croſs purpoſes make up the greateſt part of the matrimonial converſation; the huſband contemns her want of reliſh, and ſourneſs; debate and impertinence of argument, are the conſequences of her folly.

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The other ingredient, ſo eſſential to the happineſs of the marriage ſtate, is an eaſy fortune. We ought to be in a circumſtance that can ſupport the charge of a wife, and look forward to the maintenance of children, before we ſhould determine to alter our condition. We ſhould ſubdue our paſſion, rather than draw the object of our affection into inconveniencies; and make a woman, we ſeem to be fond of, a ſlave to neceſſity, and thoſe unnumbered afflictions that wait on a low and needy fortune. The conſequences are of that fatal kind, that I eſteem it a great treſpaſs, to betray an unthinking and deluded woman into ſo much miſery. It is an adage of our own, and which is certainly founded on truth and experience, That when poverty once comes in at the door, peace and quiet fly out at the window. Jars and diſlikes, upbraidings and contumely, enſue on an ebbing circumſtance; and marriage, which ought to be to a man the fountain of all good things, is often by the diſpoſition of his fortune, a heavy load, which oppreſſes him with its weight. Such it is, when a wife and children are a violent temptation to fraud, falſhood, and unlawful gains, for their maintenance: ſtrange and unfortunate ſituation of life, to be hemm'd in between indigence and knavery!

When this is the caſe, marriage is, indeed, viewed in its worſt light: it is drawing an uneaſy yoke, and tugging at the oar, and being a ſlave, without hopes of redemption: at leaſt, it is ſo with regard to the more elegant part of mankind; the poor often meet with little more than will pay the prieſt, and make them merry the firſt day, and riſe content the next morning to drudge mutually for a comfortable ſubſiſtence: but I am ſpeaking of thoſe who are born to expectations above diurnal labour; who have reaſon to hope for a life of eaſe and tranquility, and to taſte the ſweets of plenty and variety. Indeed, when people meet on terms of equality, when their fortunes on each ſide are ſufficient to make them happy, and then ſome unfriendly accident reduces them, it is barbarous

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that a coldneſs and indifference ſhould grow between them, to aggravate their unhappineſs; or that they ſhould look on one another with leſs indulgence and affection, becauſe they are overtaken with a calamity which is not in their power to fence againſt: they ſhould rather ſweeten and mitigate the ſenſe of the diſaſter with an increaſe of tenderneſs, and comfort themſelves in the occurrence of diſtreſs; that however fortune may inſult them from without, ſhe cannot make them unhappy, while love triumphs in their breaſts, and ſecures them from adverſity. We have ſo beautiful an inſtance of fondneſs under oppreſſion in one of Otway's tragedies, that few could reckon Jaffier's circumſtances calamitous, if they were ſure of finding ſo kind a partner in affliction, as Belvidera.

Jaff.——Oh! We muſt change the ſcene
In which the paſt delights of love were taſted:
The poor ſleep little: we muſt learn to watch
Our labours late; and early every morning,
Midſt winter froſts, ſparingly clad and fed,
Riſe to our toils, and drudge away the day.
Oh Belvidera!——
Want, worldly want, that hungry meagre fiend,
Is at our heels, and chaces us in view.
Can'ſt thou bear cold and hunger? Can theſe limbs,
Fram'd for the tender offices of love,
Endure the bitter gripes of ſmarting poverty?
When in a bed of ſtraw we ſhrink together,
And the bleak winds whiſtle about our heads,
Wilt thou then talk thus to me?
Thus huſh my cares, and ſhelter me with love?

Bel. Oh! I will love thee! even in madneſs love thee,
Though my diſtracted ſenſes ſhould forſake me,
Though the bare earth be all our reſting-place,
Its root our food, ſome cliff our habitation,
I'll make this arm a pillow for thy head;
And as thou ſighing ly'ſt, and ſwell'd with ſorrow,
Creep to thy boſom, pour the balm of love
Into thy ſoul, and kiſs thee to thy reſt.

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This is a true and amiable picture of connubial love, under thoſe ungentle blaſts of adverſity, which, as I have before obſerved, nip and deſtroy the bloſſoms of affection. The only remedies againſt a decay of paſſion on ſuch trials, are a ſufficient ſtock of virtue, a well-grounded love and a conſtancy of ſoul, that cannot give way to change. And where ſuch a conſtancy as this is wanting, the moſt inflamed paſſion may fall away into coldneſs and indifference, and the moſt melting tenderneſs degenerate into hate and averſion. Conſtancy is a virtue natural to perſons of even tempers and uniform diſpoſitions; and may be acquired by thoſe of the greateſt fickleneſs, violence, and paſſion; if they conſider ſeriouſly the terms of union upon which they come together, the mutual intereſt in which they are engaged, with all the motives that ought to incite their tenderneſs and compaſſion towards thoſe who have their dependance upon them, and are embarked with them for life in the ſame ſtate of happineſs or miſery. And when it grows in the mind, upon conſiderations of this nature, it becomes a moral virtue, and a kind of good-nature, that is not ſubject to any change of health, age, fortune, or any of thoſe accidents which are apt to unſettle the beſt diſpoſitions, that are founded rather in conſtitution, than in reaſon. In ſhort, without a degree of conſtancy, there can be neither love, friendſhip, nor virtue, in the world.

He that thinks himſelf fit to make a huſband, muſt ſet himſelf above being affected with trifles; he muſt ſuffer no chance to impair his kindneſs, or leſſen his eſteem for her, that is to be his life's companion. The declaration of Terence's lover is more directly ſuitable to the mouth of a huſband;

Adjuro, nunquam eam me deſerturum;
Non ſi capiundus mihi ſciam eſſe inimicos omneis homines.
Hanc mihi expetivi, contigit: conveniunt mores: valeant
Qui inter nos diſſidium volunt: hanc, niſi mors,
Mi adimet nemo.

'I proteſt ſolemnly, that I will never forſake her; 'no, not if I was ſure to contract the enmity of all 'mankind by this reſolution. Her I made the object 'of my wiſhes, and have obtained her; our diſpoſi-'tions ſuit; and I will ſhake hands with them that 'would ſow diſſention betwixt us: for death, and 'only death, ſhall take her from me.'

Marrying, formerly, was a nice thing: it was a ſettlement for life, a ſerious piece of buſineſs, and deſerved a great deal of conſideration. A man was formerly to take his wife, for better, for worſe; the ſame houſe, the ſame table, and ſame bed, were in common to them both: he was to be a huſband all his life-time; there was no coming off with ſeparate maintenance; no reconciling a wife and family with the outward appearance and delights of a ſingle life. Now it is only a commerce of convenience, a bargain ſtruck up for augmentation of fortune; and ſo dependant on the profit or inclination of friends, that the parties brought together are conſulted but at ſecond hand: and thus it becomes a ſtate only previous to ſeparation and alimony: a deed of truſt, or a ſuit of commons, diſſolves the contract.

The degeneracy of morals has ſo far prevailed of late years, that men bluſh at nothing more than being known to be huſbands; as if there were either a folly or incontinence in the confeſſion. Should a man be afraid of being ſeen with a woman, who is not his wife, one might allow it owing to his modeſty. Were he loth to frequent the company of ſuch perſons, whoſe reputation is not altogether untainted, I ſhould never wonder at him. But what impertinent whimſy can make him aſhamed of his own wife? What makes him bluſh to be ſeen in public with one whom he has choſen for an inſeparable companion? One, from whom he ſhould expect all the ſatisfaction and delight which can be reaped from human ſociety? One, whom he loves and eſteems in private; who is his chief ornament at home; who, perhaps, credits him no leſs by her extraction, than by her ſenſe, merit, and extraor-

traordinary virtue? And why did he not begin by bluſhing at his marriage? I am not unacquainted with the prevailing power of cuſtom, with its tyranizing over the mind and manners of men, even without ground or reaſon; yet I believe I ſhould have impudence enough to walk openly, and let who will ſee me with one who is my wife.

There is another fault too common in the matrimonial ſtate, which is a liberty of expoſing each other to ridicule: the huſband, with an inconſiderate pride, triumphs in the frailties of his weak woman, and makes it one of his top diverſions to ſpread her indiſcretion: he little imagines, that the condemnation of her conduct returns upon himſelf, and reproves him ſeverely for having taken a wife, the ſubject of contempt or laughter. It is certain, whatever domeſtic conteſts they have together, it is the higheſt imprudence to impeach each other to the world: for, however company may ſtrike in with the complainant, and aggravate the treſpaſs, they ſneer in their minds at the folly of the publication, and think the party aggrieved might take wiſer methods. It is ſuitable to the generoſity of man's nature, to overlook the frailties of the weaker veſſel, to make allowances of her ſide for unequal education, and rather to throw her errors into a ſhade, than bring them out into a full light. We have a proverb intirely of our own growth, that ſays, 'It is an ill bird that defiles its own neſt:' and we may eſtabliſh it as a maxim of equal verity, that he is an ill huſband, who glories in betraying the frailties of his family. The counſel of Mr. Dryden, in his Aurenzebe, is very juſt and extenſive on this head, and deſerves our ſtricteſt regard and conſideration.

Secrets of marriage ſhould be ſacred held,
Their ſweet and bitter by the wiſe conceal'd:
Errors of wives reflect on huſbands ſtill,
And when divulg'd, proclaim we've choſen ill:
For the myſterious pow'r of bed and throne,
Should always be maintain'd, but rarely ſhewn.

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The commerce in the conjugal ſtate is ſo delicate, that it is impoſſible to preſcribe rules for the conduct of it, ſo as to fit ten thouſand nameleſs pleaſures and diſquietudes which ariſe to people in that condition. But it is in this, as in ſome other nice caſes, where, touching upon the malady tenderly, is half way to the cure: and there are ſome faults which need only to be obſerved to be amended.

I ſhall conclude this chapter with a few practical directions, by which a man engaged in this important ſtate, may aim at ſecuring himſelf a laſting happineſs; ſince, as Plutarch aſſures us, there can be nothing more uſeful in conjugal ſociety, than the obſervance of wholeſome precepts, ſuitable to the harmony of the matrimonial commerce.

The firſt neceſſary rule to this end, is, That in marriage the chief buſineſs be to acquire a prepoſſeſſion in favour of each other. They ſhould conſider one another's words and actions with a ſecret indulgence: there ſhould be always an inward fondneſs pleading for each other; ſuch as may add new beauties to every thing that is excellent, give charms to what is indifferent, and cover every thing that is defective. For want of this kind propenſity and biaſs of mind, the married pair often take things ill of each other, which no one elſe would take notice of in either of them.

It is too commonly ſeen, that the ſmarteſt pangs which we meet with, are in the beginning of wedlock; which proceed from ignorance of each other's humour, and want of prudence to make allowances for a change from the moſt careful reſpect, to the moſt unbounded familiarity. Hence it ariſes, that trifles are commonly occaſions of the greateſt anxiety: and therefore, I take it to be the firſt maxim in a married condition, that you are to be above trifles. When two perſons have ſo good an opinion of each other, as to come together for life, they will not differ in matters of importance; becauſe they think of each other with reſpect, in regard to all things of conſideration that may affect them, and are prepared for mutual

tual aſſiſtance and relief in ſuch occurrences: but for leſs occaſions, they have formed no reſolutions, but leave their minds unprepared.

It may likewiſe be of ſingular uſe to carry an even hand in our conduct, to regulate our tempers, and never give way too far, either to prejudice or prepoſſeſſion; never to indulge ourſelves in humours of provocation, or deſcend below the dignity of our natures by too indiſcreet fondneſs. In a word, it is neither ſafe to vex a woman unreaſonably, nor humour her too much; the exceſs of fondneſs, as well as the defect of natural love may equally undo us. Prudent generoſity is the only method of making ourſelves happy in the enjoyment of them.

There is one caution, which if not obſerved, all other rules will be ineffectual: it is a rock on which happineſs is always ſplit; by which, joys are extinguiſhed, and life itſelf made inſupportable. I take theſe marks to be ſo ſingular and diſtinguiſhing, that I ſcarce need add, that I mean jealouſy: if we either conſult our own peace, or the world's good opinion, we muſt not cheriſh a foul ſuſpicion of the honour of our wives. It is a paſſion that grows inſenſibly, when encouraged; ſpreads through the whole maſs of blood, and infects the animal ſpirits: it is the jaundice of the mind that is only curable by diſſolution: it is a foul and tainted perſpective, that ſpoils the colour of every object which we ſurvey through it, and makes the brighteſt bloom look like a ſickly yellow. To define it at once, jealouſy in love, is like diſtruſt in other things, an opinion that every one cheats and impoſes on us.

Jealouſy has been defined to be that pain which a man feels from the apprehenſion that he is not equally beloved by the perſon whom he entirely loves. This definition ſeems to paint the paſſion in too fair a light; and comes near thoſe excuſes the ingenuity of poets have made for its uſurping a place in the breaſt: particularly Mr. Dryden has made room for its entertainment, by ſeeming to think that love cannot exiſt without it:

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The greateſt care the higher paſſion ſhews;
We hold that deareſt, we moſt fear to loſe.
Diſtruſt, in lovers, is too warm a ſun;
But yet 'tis night in love when that is gone:
And in thoſe climes which moſt his ſcorching know,
He makes the nobleſt fruits and metals grow.

I will not aſſert againſt the poſſibility of a noble jealouſy; but I believe it muſt be founded on an emulation in love: no huſband's breaſt, if he truly loves, can be ſo calm and luke-warm, as to be ſenſible his paſſion is ſlighted, and yet feel it with indifference: a generous reſentment muſt ſpring from this knowledge, and will terminate in contempt, or averſion. I would not have a man willingly give way to the temptation of ſuch a thought, but my caution was particularly laid down againſt our yielding to thoſe raſh ſuggeſtions, that our love is not ſlighted, but injured: that the falſe ſhe has betrayed her honour, and given up the huſband's property to the invader. Now, though it is almoſt impoſſible for a jealous man to be cured of his ſuſpicions, yet he will purſue the ſhadow of a doubt and believe it will lead him on to ſatisfaction: his thoughts hang at beſt in a ſtate of doubtfulneſs and uncertainty, and are never capable of receiving any ſatisfaction on the advantageous ſide; ſo that his enquiries are moſt ſucceſsful, when they diſcover nothing: his pleaſure ariſes from his diſappointments, and his life is ſpent in purſuit of a ſecret that deſtroys his happineſs, if he chance to find it.

Whether it proceed, or not, from an exceſs of love, it is a diſeaſe of ſo malignant a nature, that it converts all it takes into its own nouriſhment. A cool or a fond behaviour will adminiſter to its increaſe; while the firſt is interpreted a ſymptom of indifference; and the latter an artifice of diſſimulation. There is no word or geſture ſo inſignificant, but it gives the tormented huſband new hints, feeds his ſuſpicions, and furniſhes him with freſh matters of diſcovery. Powerful ſuſpicion never fails of ſupplying demonſtration; and as Spakeſpear has admirably expreſſed it, in his Othello:

——— Trifles

——————Trifles, light as air,
Are to the jealous, confirmation ſtrong
As proofs of holy writ.

One would think the torments of this unreaſonable diſquietude ſhould have a peculiar prevalence on the mind of man, and deter him from harbouring ſo uneaſy a gueſt: a quality that preys on his health, and corrodes his quiet; palls his appetites and forbids his repoſe; that holds no correſpondence with comfort or gaiety, but is dead to pleaſure, feeds on diſcontent, and aſſociates with perplexity. I never read or ſaw the extremities of this paſſion's working in Othello, without the ſtrongeſt compaſſion for the man, and terror, at the pains with which his nature is ſubdued; what pangs do we conceive from the complaints of his ſuppoſed injury; and ſtrike in with his ſentiments, even at a time, when we know he is betrayed into ſuſpicions, and are apprized that his affection is unreaſonable? I believe, his expreſſions are ſo juſt on the occaſion, that the whole clan of jealous men, with the like proportion of eloquence, would condole their misfortune in the ſame caſt of thought.

——Had it pleaſed heaven
To try me with afflictions; had they rain'd
All kinds of ſores and ſhames on my bare head,
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips,
Given to captivity, me, and my utmoſt hopes,
I ſhould have found in ſome place of my ſoul
A drop of patience.——But, alas! to make me
The fixed figure for the time of ſcorn,
To point his ſlow and moving finger at!
Yet could I bear that too! well, very well!
But there, where I had garner'd up my heart,
Where, either I muſt live, or bear no life:
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or elſe dries up: to be diſcarded thence,
Or keep it for a ciſtern for foul toads

To knot and gender in! turn thy complexion there,
Patience, thou young and roſe-lipp'd cherubim,
I here look grim as hell.———

If the effects and torments, which this paſſion brings along with it, are not ſufficient to ſecure us from its attacks, it will be in vain to urge the fatality of its conſequences: the expedients of vengeance it puts a man on, when he once has poſſeſſed himſelf of his conſort's infidelity; when all the fury of injured love breaks looſe, and the whole train of affections ſettle into reſentment, averſion, and violent reſolutions of revenge.

I do not mean, that a huſband is to be blind to notorious indications of wantonneſs; that is, to be ſo partial to his wife's honour, as not to be ſenſible of a palpable diſgrace; for in this caſe, jealouſy is loſt in proof; and the certainty of being wrong'd, inſpires a juſt indignation: but I would infer, that we are not to ſuſpect her of incontinence, either upon no grounds, or on trivial circumſtances. It is the advice of the wiſe man in Eccleſiaſticus, 'Be not jealous 'over the wife of thy boſom; and teach her not an 'evil leſſon againſt thyſelf.'

I will conclude my thoughts on this theme, with taking notice, that to give into jealouſy too raſhly, implies a tacit confeſſion of our own want of merit, and provokes the ſuſpected, either to turn the tables on us, or aſſume a liberty of deſerving our cenſure.

Next to being free from ſuſpecting levity on the woman's part, we are to account it our duty, to give no room for the calling of our own conſtancy into queſtion: we muſt not abuſe the good-natured virtue of a woman, and fly out into licentious courſes ourſelves, becauſe we are ſecure of not being paid in the ſame kind. This is a diſhoneſty and ingratitude unworthy of a man; a violation of his promiſe made before God, and a voluntary branding of himſelf with perjury and falſehood.

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When we are determined to enter into the conjugal ſtate, we ſhould bid adieu to the empty faſhions and falſe gallantries of the town: we ſhould take the direction of the old Greek proverb along with us; Ἀλλῳ βίῳ ἄλλη Δίαιτα, 'We are beginning a new kind of life, and conſequently muſt think of a new diet.' We ſhould correct in ourſelves, all tendencies to libertiniſm, and look on ourſelves now as deſtined to ſober and reaſonable pleaſures. It has been one of the unhappineſſes of marriage, that a few looſe men of genius for pleaſure, have turned it all to the gratification of ungoverned deſires, in ſpite of good ſenſe, form, and order: when, in truth, any ſatisfaction beyond the boundaries of reaſon, is but a ſtep towards madneſs and folly. But thoſe who are far gone in the pleaſures of the town, who cannot ſupport life without quick ſenſations and gay reflections, who are lovers of gallantry, rattle, and nonſenſe, and are ſtrangers to tranquillity, to right reaſon, and a calm motion of ſpirit without tranſport or dejection, are improper perſons to make huſbands of: they are immediately ſated with poſſeſſion, and muſt neceſſarily fly to new acquiſitions of beauty, to paſs away the whiling moments and intervals of life; for with them, every hour is heavy, that is not joyous. And ſuch gallants, with too much raſhneſs, throwing themſelves into this ſtate of gravity, ſo averſe to their conſtitutions, has rendered marriage too often the ſubject of contempt and general ridicule.

There is nothing ſo common, as for men to enter into marriage, without ſo much as expecting to be happy in it: they ſeem to propoſe to themſelves a few holidays in the beginning of it; after which, they are to return, at beſt, to the uſual courſe of their life; and, for ought they know, to conſtant miſery and uneaſineſs.

Thoſe, indeed, who begin this ſtage of life, without jars at their ſetting out, arrive within few months, at a pitch of benevolence and affection, of which the moſt perfect friendſhip is but a faint reſemblance.

As in the unfortunate marriage, the moſt minute and indifferent things are objects of the ſharpeſt reſentment; ſo, in a happy one, they are occaſions of the moſt exquiſite ſatisfaction: for, what does not oblige, in one we love? What does not offend, in one we diſlike.

In ſhort, tranquillity of mind, good-nature and virtue, are the proper qualifications to ſeaſon us for matrimony: with theſe endowments, we ſhall think ourſelves bound to look on our partner with the eyes of reaſon and honour, and always account her the object of our love and pity, who came to our arms the object of our joy and admiration.

'Twere needleſs, to be more prolix on this head, ſince they who know how to profit from the abſtract of rules already laid down, will, with as much facility, be able to ſupply to themſelves what is ſtill deficient to the ſubject.

RELI-

RELIGION.

THE preceding chapter is written on a ſubject of the greateſt importance to our happineſs or miſery in this life; the preſent treatiſe is of ſtill higher conſequence, and looks forward to our concern in futurity; a theme, in which, not the tranſitory eaſe of a frail body is engaged, but the eternal felicity of our ſouls after death.

There is too great a number of men in the world, who, from a fault in education, and a pernicious habit of libertiniſm, have their hearts and minds wholly fixed on this ſmall part of the univerſe they are placed in; who ſet a value upon nothing, nor love any thing beyond it; whoſe ſouls are as much confined, as that narrow ſpot of ground they call their eſtate, the extent of which is meaſured, the acres are numbered, and the utmoſt bounds limited: they are ſo ſhort-ſighted, that they cannot look beyond the heavens and the ſtars, to contemplate the Divinity, to which they owed their original. They are not able to perceive the excellency of what is ſpiritual; or have any notions of the dignity of the ſoul: how much the whole world is inferior to it! How great a want it has of an all-perfect being, which is God! And how abſolutely it needs a religion to find out that God, and be aſſured of his reality.

Indeed, a man's remembrance of his creed may tell him there is a God, and that he is almighty; but

if his reaſon be ſo much aſleep, as not to infer from thence the neceſſity of reverencing and obeying him; he may repeat the creed every day, and yet be an atheiſt.

Incredulity, or indifference, are ſo natural to men, that they make uſe of God and religion, as a piece of policy only; that is, as far as it may ſerve for the order and decoration of this world, the only thing, in their opinion, which deſerves to be thought on. Predominant corruption makes the generality of the world take up their religion for a faſhion; they receive it according to the country where they are born, and are therefore of that religion. Theſe men are Chriſtians rather than Jews or Heathens; becauſe that ſyſtem had the fortune to come firſt in their way, and beſpeak them at their entrance into the world.

There are too many, that live in a perfect ſtate of indolence as to an Hereafter; that put themſelves to no trouble on the ſcore of faith, and neither profeſs, nor practiſe any religion. There is, indeed, no ſuch thing as an atheiſt; but the great men, whom we are moſt apt to ſuſpect of being given that way, are too lazy to determine in their own minds, whether there is a God, or no: their indolence carries them ſo far, as to render them utterly careleſs and indifferent upon ſo weighty a matter, as well as upon the nature of their own ſouls, and the conſequences of true religion: they neither deny, nor grant any of theſe things, but, in reality, they never think on them at all.

It is too plain, from obſervation of men and manners, that multitudes who have entered the baptiſmal vow, weigh it as little when they ſhould perform it, as they did when they made it: they ſeem to have no other notion of baptiſm, but as a cuſtom of the place, or a time of feaſting; and conſider no farther ſignificancy in thoſe ſpiritual bonds, than they did in their ſwadling cloaths; nor can give any better account why they took on them Chriſt's livery, than why

why they wear ſuch garments as the common faſhion of the country preſcribes them.

I wiſh there was leſs cauſe for complaint on this account, or that the adviſing to better principles, were a certain means to effect a reformation. The beſt we can pretend to, is, to define religion, to inculcate the great duty of it, and inſinuate the certain advantages reſulting from it.

Religion may be conſidered under two general heads: the firſt comprehending what we are to believe; the other what we are to practiſe. By thoſe things which we are to believe, I mean whatever is revealed to us in the holy writings, and which we could not have obtained the knowledge of by the light of nature: by the things which we are to practiſe, I mean all thoſe duties to which we are directed by reaſon or natural religion.

As to that part of religion which conſiſts in faith, and is contained in the word of God, I ſhall beg leave to uſe the phraſe of an eminent divine. To perſuade men to believe the Scriptures, ſays he, I only offer this to their conſideration: if there be a God, whoſe providence governs the world, and all the creatures in it, is it not reaſonable to think that he hath a particular care of men, the nobleſt part of this viſible world? And ſeeing he hath made them capable of eternal duration, that he hath provided for their eternal happineſs, and ſufficiently revealed to them the way to it, and the terms and conditions of it: now, let any man produce any book in the world, that pretends to be from God, and to do this, that for the matter of it, is ſo worthy of God; the doctrines whereof, are ſo uſeful, the precepts ſo reaſonable, and the arguments ſo powerful: the truth of all which, was confirmed by ſo many great and unqueſtionable miracles; the relation of which, has been tranſmitted to poſterity, in public and authentic records, written by thoſe who were eye and ear-witneſſes of what they wrote, and free from ſuſpicion of any worldly intereſt and deſign; let any pro-

duce a book like this, in all theſe reſpects, and which, over and beſides, hath, by the power and reaſonableneſs of the doctrines contained in it, prevailed ſo miraculouſly in the world, by weak and inconſiderable means, in oppoſition to all the wit and power of the world, and under ſuch diſcouragements, as no other religion was ever aſſaulted with: let any man bring forth ſuch a book, and he hath my leave to believe it as ſoon as the Bible. But if there be none ſuch, as I am well aſſured there is not, then every one that thinks God hath revealed himſelf to men, ought to embrace and entertain the doctrine of the holy Scriptures as revealed by God.

Indeed, the weak apprehenſions of an imperfect faith, are not ſo much to be cenſured, as pitied; it is a ſure way for the heart to be prevented with the aſſurance of the omnipotent power of God, to whom nothing is impoſſible; ſo ſhall the hardeſt points of faith go down eaſily with us: if the eye of our mind looks upward, it ſhall meet with nothing to avert or interrupt it; but if right forward, or downward, or round about, every thing is a block in our way. There is, indeed, a difference betwixt deſire of aſſurance and unbelief: we cannot be too careful to raiſe up to ourſelves arguments to ſettle our faith, to find out feet for it to ſtand upon, though they are but diſcurſive. In matters of faith, if reaſons may be brought for the conviction of the gain-ſayers, it is well; if they be helps, they cannot be grounds of our belief. In the moſt faithful heart, there are ſome ſparks of infidelity; ſo, to believe, that we ſhould have no doubt at all, is ſcarce incident to fleſh and blood. It is a great perfection, if we have attained to overcome our doubts.

By ſenſe and reaſon, a man does but walk in twilight; his notions are confined to a narrow compaſs; his underſtanding is limited, and dubious; by faith, he goes a length in knowledge; he ſoars up to a communication with his Maker, and learns the reaſons of his creation, and the duties required of him. The

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differences betwixt religion and reaſon, are beautifully ſet out by the great Mr. Dryden, and ought to give us a juſt eſteem for the advantages of the former.

Dim, as the borrow'd beams of moon and ſtars
To lonely weary wandring travellers,
Is reaſon to the ſoul: and as on high,
Thoſe rolling fires diſcover but the ſky,
Not light us here; ſo reaſon's glimmering ray
Was lent, not to aſſure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as thoſe nightly tapers diſappear,
When day's bright lord aſcends our hemiſphere;
So pale grows reaſon at religion's ſight,
So dies, and ſo diſſolves in ſupernat'ral light.

The faithful man, ſays biſhop Hall, has three eyes: the firſt of ſenſe, common to him with brute creatures; the ſecond of reaſon, common to all men; the third of faith, proper to his profeſſion: each whereof looketh beyond the other, and none of them meddleth with the other's objects; for neither doth the eye of ſenſe reach to intelligible things, and matters of diſcourſe; nor the eye of reaſon, to thoſe things which are ſupernatural and ſpiritual; neither doth faith look down to things that may be ſenſibly ſeen. If we were to diſcourſe to a brute beaſt of the depth of philoſophy, never ſo plainly, he underſtands not; becauſe they are beyond the view of his eye, which is only of ſenſe: if to a mere carnal man of divine things, he perceiveth not the things of God, neither, indeed can do, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned; and therefore, no wonder, if thoſe things ſeem unlikely, incredible, and impoſſible to him, which the faithful man (having a proportionable means of apprehenſion) doth as plainly ſee, as his eye doth any ſenſible thing. Tell a plain countryman, that the ſun, or ſome higher or leſſer ſtar, is much bigger than his cart-wheel, or at leaſt, ſo many ſcores bigger than the whole earth, he laughs you to ſcorn, as affecting admiration with a learned

untruth. Yet the ſcholar, by the eye of reaſon, doth as plainly ſee and acknowledge this truth, as that his hand is bigger than his pen.

What a thick miſt of ignorance, what a palpable, and more than Egyptian darkneſs doth the natural man live in! What a world is there, that he doth not ſee at all! And how little doth he ſee in this which is his proper element! There is no bodily thing but the brute creatures ſee as well as he, and ſome of them better. As for his eye of reaſon, how dim is it in thoſe things which are beſt fitted to it! What one thing is there in nature which he doth perfectly know? What herb, or flower, or worm, that he treads on, is there, whoſe true eſſence he knoweth? No, not ſo much as what is in his own boſom; what it is, where it is, or whence it is, that gives being to himſelf. But for thoſe things which concern the beſt world, he doth not ſo much as confuſedly ſee them, neither knoweth whether they be. He ſees no whit into the great and awful majeſty of God; he diſcerns him not in all his creatures, filling the world with his infinite and glorious preſence: he ſees not his wiſe Providence over-ruling all things, diſpoſing all caſual events, ordering all ſinful actions of men to his own glory: he comprehends nothing of the beauty, majeſty, power, and mercy of the Saviour of the world, ſitting in his humanity, at his Father's right hand: he ſees not the unſpeakable happineſs of the glorified ſouls of the ſaints: he ſees not the whole heavenly commonwealth of angels (aſcending and deſcending to the behoof of God's children) waiting upon him at all times inviſibly (not excluded with coldneſs of priſons, nor deſolateneſs of wilderneſſes) and the multitude of evil ſpirits paſſing and ſtanding by him, to tempt him unto evil; but, like unto the fooliſh bird, when he hath hid his head, that he ſees nobody, he thinks himſelf altogether unſeen; and then counts himſelf ſolitary, when his eye can meet with no companion. It was not without cauſe, that we call a meer fool a natural. For however worldlings have ſtill thought Chriſtians God's fools, we know them to be the fools of the world. The deepeſt philoſopher that ever was,

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(ſaving the reverence of the ſchools) is but an ignorant ſot compared to the ſimpleſt Chriſtian: for the weakeſt Chriſtian, may, by plain information, ſee ſomewhat into the greateſt myſteries of nature, becauſe he hath the eye of reaſon common with the beſt: but the philoſopher, by all the demonſtration in the world, can conceive nothing of the myſteries of godlineſs, becauſe he utterly wants the eye of faith. Though my inſight into matters of the world be ſo ſhallow, that my ſimplicity moveth pity, or maketh ſport unto others, it ſhall be my contentment and happineſs, that I ſee further into better matters. That which I ſee not, is worthleſs, and deſerveth little better than contempt; that which I ſee, is unſpeakable, ineſtimable, for comfort, for glory.

Faith and devotion naturally grow in the mind of every reaſonable man, who ſees the impreſſions of divine power and wiſdom in every object on which he caſts his eye. The Supreme Being has made the beſt arguments for his own exiſtence in the formation of the heavens and the earth; and theſe are arguments which a man of ſenſe cannot forbear attending to, who is out of the noiſe and hurry of human affairs. Ariſtotle ſays, That ſhould a man live under ground, and there converſe with works of art and mechaniſm, and ſhould afterwards be brought up into the open day, and ſee the ſeveral glories of heaven and earth, he would immediately pronounce them the works of ſuch a being as we define God to be.

How eaſy is it to ſay, that if infidelity did not lurk in the hearts of men, they durſt not do as they do; they could not but do what they do not? Durſt they ſin, if they were perſuaded of an hell? Durſt they buy a minute of pleaſure at the hazard of everlaſting torments? Could they ſo ſlight heaven, if they believed it? Could they be ſo loth to poſſeſs it? Could they think much of a little painful goodneſs, to purchaſe an eternity of happineſs?

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untruth. Yet the ſcholar, by the eye of reaſon, doth as plainly ſee and acknowledge this truth, as that his hand is bigger than his pen.

What a thick miſt of ignorance, what a palpable, and more than Egyptian darkneſs doth the natural man live in! What a world is there, that he doth not ſee at all! And how little doth he ſee in this which is his proper element! There is no bodily thing but the brute creatures ſee as well as he, and ſome of them better. As for his eye of reaſon, how dim is it in thoſe things which are beſt fitted to it! What one thing is there in nature which he doth perfectly know? What herb, or flower, or worm, that he treads on, is there, whoſe true eſſence he knoweth? No, not ſo much as what is in his own boſom; what it is, where it is, or whence it is, that gives being to himſelf. But for thoſe things which concern the beſt world, he doth not ſo much as confuſedly ſee them, neither knoweth whether they be. He ſees no whit into the great and awful majeſty of God; he diſcerns him not in all his creatures, filling the world with his infinite and glorious preſence: he ſees not his wiſe Providence over-ruling all things, diſpoſing all caſual events, ordering all ſinful actions of men to his own glory: he comprehends nothing of the beauty, majeſty, power, and mercy of the Saviour of the world, ſitting in his humanity, at his Father's right hand: he ſees not the unſpeakable happineſs of the glorified ſouls of the ſaints: he ſees not the whole heavenly commonwealth of angels (aſcending and deſcending to the behoof of God's children) waiting upon him at all times inviſibly (not excluded with coldneſs of priſons, nor deſolateneſs of wilderneſſes) and the multitude of evil ſpirits paſſing and ſtanding by him, to tempt him unto evil; but, like unto the fooliſh bird, when he hath hid his head, that he ſees nobody, he thinks himſelf altogether unſeen; and then counts himſelf ſolitary, when his eye can meet with no companion. It was not without cauſe, that we call a meer fool a natural. For however worldlings have ſtill thought Chriſtians God's fools, we know them to be the fools of the world. The deepeſt philoſopher that ever was,

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the infinite conſequences of theſe things one way or other, and would gladly be ſatisfied, he deſerves to be heard what he can ſay; but if a man will turn religion into raillery, and confute it by two or three bold jeſts, he doth not make religion, but himſelf, ridiculous in the opinion of all conſiderate men, becauſe he ſports with his life and ſalvation. It concerns every man, that would not triſle away his ſoul, and fool himſelf into irrecoverable miſery, with the greateſt ſerioufneſs to examine the matter, without taking ſenſual and worldly intereſts into conſideration. Religion muſt be either true, or falſe: if falſe, the religious man, and ſtrict obſerver of all the precepts of ſelf-denial, ventures no more, than the loſs of his time in purſuance of its dictates; but if true, the vicious man is of all men moſt miſerable. We muſt tremble at the very thoughts of what unutterable and incomprehenſible torments we ſee him daily heaping upon himſelf. Though the truth of religion were much leſs demonſtrable, than it really is, certainly there is no ſenſible man but would chuſe to be virtuous.

Religion ſeems to point us out the ready way to the right enjoyment of life, by giving us a proſpect of a better beyond it: without this view, we muſt look on our condition with contempt, and think ourſelves unhappy to be pent up in fleſh, only to be the objects of calamity, and prey of diſtempers. Burnet, in his Theory of the Earth, has ſet this thought in an excellent light: 'What is this life,' ſays he, 'but a circu-'lation of little mean actions? We lie down, and riſe 'again, dreſs and undreſs, feed and wax hungry, work 'or play, and are weary, and then we lie down again, 'and the circle returns. We ſpend the day in triſles, 'and when the night comes, we throw ourſelves in-'to the bed of folly, amongſt dreams, and broken 'thoughts, and wild imaginations. Our reaſon lies 'aſleep by us; and we are, for the time, as errant 'brutes as thoſe that ſleep in the ſtalls, or in the fields. 'Are not the capacities of man higher than theſe? 'And ought not his ambition and expectation to be 'greater?

'greater? Let us be adventurers for another world: 'it is at leaſt, a fair and noble chance; and there is 'nothing in this worth our thoughts, or our paſſions. 'If we ſhould be diſappointed, we are ſtill no worſe 'than the reſt of our fellow-mortals; and if we ſuc-'ceed in our expectations, we are eternally happy.'

The proſpect of a future ſtate is the ſecret comfort and refreſhment of our ſouls; it is that which makes nature look gay about us; it doubles all our pleaſures, and ſupports us under all our afflictions. We can look at diſappointments and misfortunes, pain and ſickneſs, death itſelf; and what is worſe than death, the loſs of thoſe who are deareſt to us, with indifference, ſo long as we keep in view the pleaſures of eternity, and the ſtate of being, in which there will be no fears nor apprehenſions, pains nor ſorrows, ſickneſs nor ſeparation. Why will any man be ſo impertinently officious, as to tell us, all this is only fancy and deluſion? Is there any merit in being the meſſenger of ill news? If it is a dream, let us enjoy it, ſince it makes us both the happier and better men.

Infidelity, indeed, has been pretty well driven out of all its outworks. The atheiſt has not found his poſt tenable, and is therefore retired into deiſm, and a diſbelief of revealed religion only. But the truth of it is, the greateſt number of this ſet of men, are thoſe, who, for want of a virtuous education, or examining the grounds of religion, know ſo very little of the matter in queſtion, that their infidelity is but another term for their ignorance. They are wedded to opinions full of contradiction and impoſſibility, and at the ſame time, look upon the ſmalleſt difficulty in an article of faith, as a ſufficient reaſon for rejecting it. Notions that fall in with the common reaſon of mankind, that are conformable to the ſenſe of all ages and nations, not to mention their tendency for promoting the happineſs of ſocieties, or of particular perſons, are exploded as errors and prejudices; and ſchemes erected in their ſtead, that are altogether monſtrous and irrational, and require the moſt extravagant credulity to embrace them.

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I would fain aſk one of theſe begotted infidels, ſuppoſing all the great points of atheiſm, as the caſual or eternal formation of the world, the materiality of a thinking ſubſtance, the mortality of the ſoul, the fortuitous organization of the body, the motions and gravitations of matter, with the like particulars, were laid together, and formed into a kind of creed, according to the opinions of the moſt celebrated atheiſts; I ſay, ſuppoſing ſuch a creed as this were formed, and impoſed upon any one people in the world, whether it would not require an infinitely greater meaſure of faith than any ſet of articles which they ſo violently oppoſe.

Could I ſee that man who was really perſuaded there is no God, I ſhould hear at leaſt by what ſtrange convincing arguments he had found it out. One would expect from ſuch as act contrary from all the world beſides, and contradict the common received principles, that they knew more than other men; that their reaſons were plain, and their arguments convincing. But the impoſſibility I find myſelf under of proving there is no God, is a demonſtration to me that there is one.

Now as I cannot but believe the exiſtence of a God, and know my own ſtate mortal and tranſitory, I muſt look on myſelf as dependent on his power, I cannot help believing myſelf his creature, that I owe him worſhip and reverence for all the bleſſings of life; and the neceſſity of ſuch obſervance, points out to me a form of religion. If my religion be falſe, it is a ſnare, which I muſt own to be laid with ſuch temptations, that I could not avoid ruſhing into, and being caught by: what majeſty, what glory, are in its myſteries! What a connexion in all the ſeveral parts of its doctrine! How very rational is it! How candid and innocent in its morals! Who can ſtand againſt the ſtrength of ſo many millions of witneſſes, the moſt moderate and wiſeſt of men, who, during three whole ages, ſucceeded one another, and whom the ſenſe of the ſame truth ſo conſtantly ſupported in their exiles, in the darkeſt dungeons, the moſt painful torments, and even in death itſelf? Take, ſet open hiſtory, run it over through all

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its parts, take it from the beginning of the world, from the dawn of its creation; was there ever any thing like this? Could all the power of God himſelf have laid a fitter plot to deceive me? How then ſhould I eſcape? Whether ſhould I run? And how ſhould I find any thing better? Nay, but half ſo good? If I muſt periſh, it is this way I will periſh. To deny the being of a God, would indeed ſuit my inclinations much better than ſuffering myſelf to be deluded, though by ſo plauſible and ſo ſpecious a pretence: but I have examined thoroughly, have endeavoured all I could, and ſtill want the power to be an atheiſt. Thus I am forced back on my religion, and compelled to ſtick to it.

The whole world, were it made for man, is, in a litteral ſenſe, the leaſt thing God has done for man, the proof of which may be drawn from religion. Man is therefore neither preſumptuous, nor vain, when he ſubmits to the evidence of truth, and owns the advantages he has received: much rather might he be taxed with blindneſs and ſtupidity, did he refuſe to yield himſelf convinced through the multitude of proofs which religion lays before him, to ſhew him the greatneſs of his privileges, the certainty of his refuge, the reaſonableneſs of his hopes, and to teach him what he is, and what he may be.

There is a vaſt difference between being ſincerely religious, and zealouſly deſiring to be thought ſo: the profeſſors are not obliged to throw a ſevere ſanctity into their faces, to abſtain from the appearances of mirth and pleaſantry, and account them the marks of a carnal mind: to make a conſcience of wearing a ſorrowful countenance, and to be, in a manner, eaten up with ſpleen and melancholy. It is miſtaking the nature of religion, to think it conſiſts in an unchearfulneſs of heart. It is entertaining wrong notions of piety, and a weakneſs of underſtanding, to love to indulge this uncomfortable way of life, and give up ourſelves a prey to grief and melancholy: for ſuperſtitious fears and groundleſs ſcruples to cut us off from the pleaſures of converſation, and all thoſe ſocial entertain-

tainments, which are not only innocent, but laudable; as if mirth was made for reprobates, and chearfulneſs of heart denied thoſe who are the only perſons that have a proper title to it.

It is not the buſineſs of virtue or religion, to extirpate the affections of the mind, but to regulate them. They may moderate or reſtrain, but were not deſigned to baniſh gladneſs from the heart of man. Religion contracts the circle of our pleaſures, but leaves it wide enough for her votaries to expatiate in. The contemplation of the Divine Being, and the exerciſe of virtue, are in their own nature ſo far from excluding all gladneſs of heart, that they are perpetual ſources of it. In a word, the true ſpirit of religion clears, as well as compoſes the ſoul: it baniſhes, indeed, all levity of behaviour, all vicious and diſſolute mirth; but in exchange, fills the mind with a perpetual ſerenity, uninterrupted chearfulneſs, and an habitual inclination to pleaſe others, as well as to be pleaſed in itſelf.

It is the remark of Plutarch, that our great ignorance of, and want of acquaintance with the Divine Beings, moſt naturally runs in two ſtreams; whereof the one, in harſh and coarſe tempers, as in dry and ſtubborn ſoils, produces atheiſm; and the other, in the moſt tender and flexible, as in moiſt and yielding grounds, a ſuperſtitious dread.

Atheiſm, which is a misjudging that there are no bleſſed and incorruptible beings, tends yet, by a diſbelief of their divinity, to bring men to a ſort of unconcernedneſs and indifferency of temper: for the deſign of thoſe that deny a God, is to eaſe themſelves of this fear. But ſuperſtition appears by its appellation to be a diſtempered opinion and conceit, productive of ſuch mean and abject apprehenſions, as debaſe and break a man's ſpirit; while he thinks there are divine powers indeed, but withal, ſour and vindictive ones. So that the atheiſt is not at all, and the ſuperſtitious is not duly, affected with the thoughts of God; ignorance depriving the one of the ſenſe of his goodneſs, and ſuper-

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We ought particularly to defend our reaſon againſt both theſe abominable errors: to deny the being of a Divinity, and utterly to throw off his protection and providence, is the greateſt injury we can do to our own ſouls: ſo to confeſs him, and yet with that ſervile fear that may prejudice his mercy, is a prophanation of his ſacred eſſence. As we ought to reſt aſſured that there is a God, ſo let us believe that there is one will take care of us, both under a preſent affliction, and the apprehenſion of a diſtant evil. So ſhall we be ſecure, that either God, by his providence, will prevent the evils we fear, or will ſupport us under them when they come. It is impoſſible for any man who ſees only the ſmalleſt part of the univerſe, to doubt of a free and Supreme Being, until by the ſenſe of his wickedneſs it becomes his intereſt there ſhould be none. For certainly there never was any man who ſaid there was no God, but he wiſhed it firſt. When men live as if there were no God, it becomes expedient for them that there ſhould be none; and then they endeavour to perſuade themſelves ſo; and are glad to find arguments to fortify themſelves in that perſuaſion. It was good counſel given to the Athenians, to be very careful Philip of Macedon was dead, before they expreſſed their joy at his death, leaſt they might find him alive to revenge their haſty triumph; and ſo let the atheiſt be ſure there is no God, before they preſume thus to defy him, leaſt they find him at laſt aſſert his being in their deſtruction.

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dence, from the compaſſion and long-ſuffering of the Divinity, from the calamities under which the good and virtuous groan, from the proſperity of thoſe that deſerve it not, and the impunity of wretches who ſeem to dare the arm of vengeance, and provoke God to aſſert his omnipotence. It becomes not the Supreme Deity, ſay theſe caſuiſts, to be remiſs in any thing, but more eſpecially in the proſecution of the wicked; ſince they themſelves are no ways negligent or dilatory in doing miſchief, but are always driven on by the moſt rapid impetuoſities of their paſſions to acts of injuſtice.

It is a ſaying of Thucydides, That revenge which follows injury cloſeſt at the heels, preſently puts a ſtop to the progreſs of ſuch as make advantage of ſucceſsful wickedneſs: therefore there is no debt, with ſo much prejudice put off, as that of juſtice; for it weakens the hopes of the perſons wronged, and renders them comfortleſs and penſive, but heightens the boldneſs and daring inſolence of the oppreſſor. Were the impieties of enormous tranſgreſſors, ſay theſe ſhallow diſputants, ſingly ſcourged and repreſſed by immediate ſeverity, it would bring them at length to a ſenſe of their folly, humble them, and ſtrike them with an awe of the Divine Being, whom they find with a watchful eye beholding the actions and paſſions of men, and feel to be no dilatory, but a ſpeedy avenger of iniquity: whereas the ſame remiſs and ſlow-paced juſtice, as Euripides deſcribes it, that falls upon the wicked by accident, by reaſon of its incertainty, ill-timed delay, and diſorderly motion, ſeems rather to reſemble chance than Providence.

The old heathens, who had more perfect notions of a ſuperior Providence, than the weak Chriſtians, wiſely painted divine vengeance, *Plumbeis Pedibus, at ferreis Manibus*, with leaden feet, but with iron hands: intimating, that however ſlowly the juſt vengeance of the gods crept after offenders, yet when it once overtook them in their iniquity, its ſeverity would compenſate for the delay, and their reprieve from ſorrow.

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How bold and daring an arrogance is it in us, that are but mortal men, to dive too far into the incomprehenſible myſteries of the Divinity! It is more ridiculous, as well as inſolent, than if perſons wholly void of knowledge, ſhould undertake to judge of the methods and reaſon of cunning artiſts by ſlight opinions, and probable conjectures of their own. How deſpicable ſhould we account the man, who underſtands nothing of the ſcience, yet would be giving reaſons for a phyſician's proceeding with his patient; and why he rather gave lenitives, than harſher potions! So likewiſe it is neither eaſy nor ſafe, to ſpeak otherwiſe of the Supreme Being, than only this, That he alone it is, who knows the moſt convenient time to apply proper corroſives for the cure of ſin and impiety; and, as medicines, to adminiſter puniſhments to every tranſgreſſor; yet not confined to an equal quality and meaſure common to all diſtempers, nor to one and the ſame time. Pindar, ſpeaking of the eternal Ruler and Lord of all things, gives him the title of the moſt perfect artificer; as being the great author and diſtributer of juſtice, to whom it properly belongs to determine, at what time, in what manner, and to what degree, to puniſh every particular offender.

There is no greater benefit that men can enjoy from God, than by the imitation and purſuit of theſe perfections, and that ſanctity which is in him, to be excited to the ſtudy of virtue. Therefore he, with forbearance, and at leiſure, inflicts his puniſhments upon the wicked; not that he is afraid of committing an error, or of repenting, ſhould he accelerate his indignation; but to eradicate that brutiſh and eager deſire of revenge that reigns in human breaſts; and to teach us, that we are not, in the heat of fury, now when our anger heaving ſwells up above our underſtanding, to fall upon thoſe who have done us an injury, like ſuch as ſeek to gratify a vehement thirſt or craving appetite; but that we ſhould, in imitation of this mildneſs and forbearance, with due compoſure of mind (till after ſuch ſufficient time for conſideration taken,

as

as may admit of no repentance) give way to the desire of chastisement or correction.

Probable it is, says Plutarch, that God, whatever distempered soul it be which he persecutes with his divine justice, observes the motions and inclinations of it, whether they be such as tend to repentance; and allows time for the reformation of those, whose wickedness is neither invincible, or incorrigible; well-knowing, what a proportion of virtue, souls from himself, conveyed to generation, carry along with them, and how strong and vigorous their innate and primitive good yet continues: for wickedness buds forth preternaturally upon the corruption of bad diet, and evil conversation; but then some souls recovering again to perfect cure, or an indifferent habitude, is the reason the Deity does not inflict his punishments alike upon all.

Were this argument of ten thousand times less force and prevalence than it is, the certain remorse of conscience in the guilty, is a convincing argument of a Divine Providence, a tacit condemnation of them for acting against their duty; and in those duties, which should be performed, is religion implied. Are not the minds of the impious distressed with fears and sorrows, ungrateful remembrances, suspicions of futurity, and distrusts of present accidents? And what do these anxieties and terrors amount to, but accusations for omitted duties? Every man is a little world within himself; and in this little world, there is a court of judicature erected, wherein, next under God, the conscience sits as the supreme judge, from whom there is no appeal; that passeth sentence upon us, upon all our actions, upon all our intentions; for our persons, absolving one, condemning another; for our actions, allowing one, forbidding another: if that condemn us, in vain shall all the world beside acquit us; and if that clear us, the doom which the world passeth upon us, is frivolous and ineffectual.

But allowing that the delay of sinners punishments be no argument against the over-ruling of Providence, and that conscience is the appeal, in our bosom, of right

right or wrong, yet there are other miſtaken notions countenanced amongſt men, to the diſcouragement of religion. It is too frequently looked upon as an object of terror, an extinguiſher of pleaſure and vivacity, a motive of reſerve, and gloomineſs; that it muſt draw men from all converſe and ſocial enjoyment, and tie them up to ſolitude and contemplation. Theſe views are all of prejudice and error; for, as I have already obſerved, true religion is chearful and affable, delights in all innocent pleaſures, and only controuls thoſe that are guilty: the rigid and preciſe demeanour, is rather phariſaical, than devout.

Religion has a ſuperiority above all other things, and is as neceſſary to our living happy in this world, as it is to our being ſaved in the next; it makes men obedient to government, and conformable to laws; it makes men peaceable to each other; it heals the natures of men, and ſweatens their ſpirits; it corrects their paſſions, and mortifies all thoſe luſts, which are the cauſes of enmities and diviſions. If men would live as religion requires they ſhould, the world would be a quiet habitation: and the true reaſon why the ſocieties of men are ſo full of tumult and diſorder, is, becauſe there is ſo little true religion among them. So that if it were not for ſome ſmall remainders of piety and virtue, which are yet ſcattered amongſt mankind, human ſociety would in a ſhort time diſband and run into confuſion, the earth would grow wild and become a great foreſt, and men would turn beaſts of prey one to another. Indecent feuds and hoſtilities have been, of old, the reproach of human kind.——

——— *Sevis inter ſe convenit Urſis;*
Homo homini Lupus, ———

ſays Juvenal: the rugged bears live in amity with themſelves: but one man is as a wolf to another, and would tear his throat out.

Religion has ſo great an influence upon the felicity of man, that it ought to be upheld out of regard to their

their temporal peace and proſperity, as well as to their eternal: it qualifies all ſorts of men, and makes them in public affairs, the more ſerviceable; governors apter to rule with conſcience, and inferiors, for conſcience ſake, the willinger to obey.

Thoſe, who upon the pretence of the difficulties of religion, abandon themſelves to a wicked courſe of life, may eaſily be convinced (though, perhaps, when it is too late) that they took more pains to make themſelves miſerable, than they need have done, to bring themſelves to happineſs. There is no proportion betwixt the ſufferings of this world, and the glories of the next: between heaven, and an eſtate; between the ſpan of a man's life, and the days of eternity. Theſe things conſidered, I take it to be a Chriſtian's duty, to be moderate in his purſuits here; to walk by faith, and not by ſight; and tranſplant his affections from earth to heaven. A perſon truly religious, prefers regularity of practice, peace of conſcience, divine favour, and expectations beyond death, to all other things. Thoſe who are not willing to part with their eaſe, to balk their pleaſure, to ſacrifice their intereſt upon this ſcore, are ſhort in their piety. God is the fartheſt object of their deſire. And, certainly, when our faith is once ſoared to his knowledge, our practice muſt follow that knowledge, with obedience to his commands, and adherence to enjoined duty. Nor let the words of duty and obedience ſcare us; for we have our Saviour's own aſſurance to encourage us, That 'his yoke is eaſy, and his burthen light.'

In ſhort, when we are once come to believe the exiſtence of a God; we cannot but worſhip him, or know we ſin in not doing it; and after this, morality will be a great part of our religion. All our taſk is to live ſo uprightly, as not to incur the reproach of our own conſcience; to love our neighbours, to do juſtice betwixt man and man, by the ſame meaſure and proportion as we deſire it ſhould be returned to ourſelves. Theſe are the injunctions which will ſecure our happineſs hereafter, and can be no bar to our preſent enjoyments.

ments. We may be devout, and not preciſe; religious and not auſtere; may keep up to all the offices and commands of obedience impoſed, yet not be reſtrained from any pleaſures innocent or reaſonable. So that religion is only a curb to tempers of impiety, a reſtriction on prophaneneſs, a bar to libertiniſm, and and a ſtrong check to injuſtice and immorality: but where our inclinations and our pleaſures are bounded by reaſon, honour, and morality, religion is a choice companion and comforter, a guide and counſellor, a ſpur to, and a ſeaſoner of our recreations, the life of ſociety, and relief of our ſolitude.

DETRAC-

DETRACTION.

DETRACTION and calumny are certainly the meaneſt and moſt ungenerous vices a man can be guilty of; they make us vilely prey on the reputation of another, without the leaſt real addition to our own. I muſt confeſs I ſhould always ſuſpect that man to have a very ſlender pretence to merit, who would labour to impoſe this belief upon me, by declaiming at the imperfections of another. They are frailties which carry a great ſpice of envy with them, without any noble mixture of emulation. If I muſt look into the failings of a third perſon, I ought to make them leſſons of inſtructions to myſelf; to refine upon his deficiencies, not declaim on them. I remember a very good reprimand to cenſure, in a play of Shakeſpear's; 'give every man ac-'cording to his deſerts,' ſays he, 'and who ſhall eſ-'cape whipping?' let us examine whether we do not, in ſome reſpect, deſerve the laſh, before we bind up the ſcourge for our neighbour.

Slander, ſays Theophraſtus, is a ſecret propenſity of mind; to think ill of all men, and afterwards to utter ſuch ſentiments in ſcandalous expreſſion. It has been an infirmity that has flouriſhed in all times; and the old world, as well as the new, produced advocates for defamation. There is a little ſpleen inherent in human nature; when it is not corrected and altered by religion or philoſophy, feeds itſelf on gleaning up imperfections; which is very liberal of diſgorging itſelf to the diſadvantage of others, but very

very ſparing and unwilling to allow them the real merit of their good actions.

There is a luſt in man, no charm can tame,
Of loudly publiſhing his neighbour's ſhame:
On eagles wings immortal ſcandals fly,
While virtuous actions are but born, and die;

ſays Juvenal. As I have already on a different ſubject, in this treatiſe, taken notice that jealouſy of another's virtue is a tacit confeſſion of our own want of merit, ſo I may with reaſon ſay the ſame of Detraction. We ſhould never liſten to the injurious reports, if we were not doubtful our own characters ſtood in need of being defended from a plea of error in that of our neighbour; and were conſcious our reputation muſt ſtand on the bottom of frailties, with which others are overtaken. *Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*, has been an excuſe for too many errors in poeſy. The great Homer, was ſometimes aſleep, and why ſhould we be denied the privilege of nodding? Theſe ſorts of arguments, I ſay, found our exemption from precedented error; inſtead of which we ſhould owe our characters only to our merit, and not viſible defaults in others. It is an honeſt and worthy maxim of Menander's:

Ὅστις δὲ διαβολαῖς πειθεῖται ταχύ,
Ἤτοι πονηρὸς αὐτός ἐστι τὸν τρόπον,
Ἢ παντάπασι παιδαρίου γνώμην ἔχει.

'He that lends an eaſy and credulous ear to ca-'lumny, is either a man of very ill morals, or has 'no more ſenſe and underſtanding than a child.' We take ſo many notions from prejudice and prepoſſeſſions, that the faults we are too fond of declaiming againſt, are generally founded on ſuggeſtions of partiality; yet we give our tongues as great a looſe in running them down, as if they were not only real blots, but as if we ourſelves were out of a

poſſibility of being cenſured for any errors or ſlips in conduct.

I remember to have read amongſt the epiſtles of Phalaris, a reproof from that tyrant to Cleoſtratus; which is a leſſon of general advice to all ſuch as indulge themſelves in a liberty of carping and calumny: 'I can but think it (ſays he) a ſubject of laughter, 'as well as wonder, that you take upon you to play 'the cenſor, and ſet up for a reformer of manners; 'τὸν γὰρ ἄλλοις ἐπίπληξιν ἐπιβαλλόμενον, αὐτὸν 'ἀπηλλάχθαι χρὴ πάσης τοῦ ψόγου: for he that re-'ſumes a pretenſion of correcting others, ought to 'be free from the imputations of the leaſt propenſity 'to vice himſelf.'

But however ſevere and cenſorious we are, as to the errors of others, we carry a perverſe fooliſh fondneſs in our boſoms, which will not let us diſcern half our own imperfections; and thoſe we do diſcern, teaches us to connive at 'em.

Stultus & improbus hic amor eſt, dignuſque notari,
Cum tua pervideas oculis mala lippuis inunctis:
Cur in amicorum vitiis tam cernis acutum,
Quam aut Aquila, aut ſerpens Epidaurius?

ſays Horace. If men would but take ſedate reaſons along with their paſſion, they muſt conclude that they cannot monopolize the privilege of defamation; that the airs they give themſelves, will be taken notice of, and the liberties they uſe with other people's characters, end in the world's examination of their own. As a ſpirit of detraction and calumny makes a man ſhunned, and hated by company, who look upon him like a baſe writ of enquiry into their words and actions, ſo on the contrary, a candid diſpoſition, that is for taking every thing by the beſt handle, as our vulgar term it, that is, rather for finding an excuſe for an error, than ſpreading it out in its blackeſt colours; ſuch a candid diſpoſition, I ſay, gives a man love, reſpect, and reverence, makes him embraced and

and courted by all ſociety, is a curb on ſcandal and backbiting, and gains him the applauſe even of thoſe revilers, who delight in ſpeaking evil.

We ought to make uſe of generoſity in our cenſures, and ſpare giving our opinions in ſuch manner, as may ſavour of rancour and ill-natured ſeverity.

There is hardly an error, but may be palliated by a favourable conſtruction, and made more black than it really is, by the venom of a malicious tongue, and the oratory of ill-will. Now, as this is certain beyond contradiction, it is much nobler in us to ſalve, than declaim againſt the imperfections of our fellow-creatures; *Quia ſit quædam virtutibus ac vitiis vicinitas, utendum proximâ derivatione verborum, ut pro temerario fortem, pro prodigo liberalem, pro avaro parcum vocemus!* ſays Quintilian. That becauſe there is a certain nearneſs and affinity in virtues and vices, we are to make uſe of the word that comes neareſt to the expreſſion of the thing, ſo that we muſt ſtile a raſh man brave, a prodigal liberal, and a miſer ſaving. We ſhould look on the failings of another, as a father does on the deformities of his children; term ſquinting, a caſt of the eye; immoderate laughter, the heighth of good humour; and impertinent loquacity, the deſire of being obliging in company.

But, for the generality, we are ſo much the reverſe of this, that we are even for grimacing upon virtue, and turning good qualities into ridicule. So our gall and ſatyr are but employed, no matter whether the occaſion be juſt or reaſonable, we have the pleaſure of ſatisfying a depravity of appetite; and it is the ſame thing to us, though it be at the expence of virtue.

It is a maxim in one of Demoſthenes's orations, that μηδὲν ἁμαρτεῖν ἐσὶ θεῶν, to be guilty of no errors, is only peculiar to the divine nature, and it is as certain, that meer man is ſubject to many: none are abſolutely good, but by compariſon with thoſe who are worſe; and he ſtands in the higheſt rank of perfection, who is leaſt infected with the ſpreading

frailties. Therefore to judge honeſtly and impartially, we are to put good qualities in the balance againſt the bad ones; and if the ſcale of the firſt outweighs, the latter ought not to be brought into account.

In ſhort, to overcome the ſpirit of detraction in us, we ſhould look with ſevere and unbiaſſed eyes into our own boſoms, examine our actions and conduct, and ſee what levities we have from nature, and how many more we have contracted by cuſtom. When we have diſcovered a fault, let us peruſe ourſelves yet cloſer, to try what figure we make under it, and with what eyes we ſhould behold it in another perſon We ſhould take the beam out of our own eye, before we pluck the mote out of that of our brother.

It is well known, that we only approve of others, for the reſemblance we imagine they bear to ourſelves; yet the ſame vices which are deformed and inſupportable in others, we don't feel in ourſelves; they are not burdenſome to us, but ſeem to reſt without weight, as in their proper center. Such an one, ſpeaking of another, draws a diſmal picture of him, not in the leaſt imagining, that, at the ſame time, he is painting himſelf. There is nothing, indeed, would make us amend our own faults ſo readily, as to be able impartially to diſcern and avow them in others. 'Tis at this juſt diſtance, that they appear what they are, and raiſe in us an indignation equal to their demerit. Now, wiſe conduct turns upon two axes; the paſt, and the future: he who has a faithful memory, and great foreſight, is out of danger of cenſuring in others, thoſe faults he may have been guilty of himſelf; or condemning an action which is a parallel caſe, and in like circumſtances would be impoſſible for him to avoid. It is monſtrous to conſider, how eaſy and pleaſed we are, when we rally, play upon, and deſpiſe others; and how angry and choleric, when we are ourſelves rally'd, play'd upon, and deſpiſed.

It

It is obſervable, that however fond people are of detraction and calumny themſelves, they always look with ſcorn upon thoſe who exerciſe theſe talents before them; and however true they may judge the tenor of their raillery, they conſider it as the produce of envy, and ſeem unwilling to give that an ear, which perhaps, they triumph in reporting to a freſh company.

In a word, all backbiting, degrading, and detraction, are vices too mean for men of honour and principles to think of, much more to practiſe: I would not raſhly rob a man of his reputation, even in my private thoughts; or hold him in light eſtimation, for ſuch failings, as I expect every one ſhould either overlook or pardon in myſelf. 'Tis the charter of the female ſex, to calumniate: ſcandal is the privilege of the tea-table and drawing-room: and I would never have our ſex contend with them in that which they account a pleaſure, but we muſt eſteem a falling from honour.

TALKATIVENESS.

IT is a troubleſome and difficult taſk which philoſophy undertakes in going about to cure the diſeaſe, or rather itch of intemperate prating: for that words, which are the ſole remedy againſt it, require attention. But they who are given to prate, will hear no body; as being a ſort of people that loves to be always talking themſelves.

If we would define loquacity, ſays Theophraſtus, it is an exceſſive intemperance of words. The prater will not ſuffer any perſon in company to tell his own ſtory, but let it be what it will, tells you, you miſtake the matter: he only apprehends the thing right; and if you pleaſe to hear him, he will make it very clear to you. The interruptions of theſe impertinent talkers, as they make them the marks of ridicule, ſo are they moſt unreaſonable methods of ſupporting converſation. They weary out a man with the volubility of their poor rhetoric, and teize him into a deteſtation of ſociety in general, for fear of being worried. I would as willingly ſuffer the torment and gratings of a thouſand diſcordant ſounds, as to be run out of all temper, and talked out of patience, by theſe eternal triflers.

The principal vice of loquacious perſons, is that their ears are ſtopped to every thing but their own impertinencies: this I take to be a willing deafneſs in men, controuling and contradicting nature, that has given us two ears, though but one tongue. As

ſedate

ſedate and moderate people retain what is ſpoken to them; ſo, on the contrary, whatever is ſaid to talkative perſons, runs through them as through a cullender; and then they whiſk about from place to place, like empty veſſels, void of ſenſe or wit, but making a hideous noiſe. We frequently talk with impetuoſity in company, through vanity or humour, rarely with neceſſary caution; deſirous to reply, before we have heard out the queſtion, we follow our own notions, and explain them, without the leaſt regard to other mens reaſons. Were a man to hear and write down theſe converſations, he would ſee, perhaps, a great many good things ſpoken, but with little conſideration and leſs coherence. It muſt be accounted a ſad thing, when men have neither wit enough to ſpeak well, nor judgment enough to hold their tongues; for this want is the foundation of all impertinence.

Were garrulity a curable vice in nature, one would think your great talkers ſhould be broke of that faculty, by ſeeing the uneaſineſs it puts their hearers under: for when a fool, full of noiſe and talk enters into a room where friends are met to diſcourſe, to regale or be merry, the whole company are huſhed of a ſudden, and afraid of giving him any occaſion to ſet his tongue upon the career. And if he once begin to open, they are glad to ſheer off, and avoid the perſecution: like ſeamen, that foreſeeing an immediate ſtorm and rowling of the waves, when they hear the north-wind begin to whiſtle from an adjoining promontory, make all the ſail they can and haſten into harbour. I muſt confeſs when a man expreſſes himſelf well upon any occaſion, and his falling into an account of any ſubject ariſing from a deſire to oblige the company; or from fullneſs of the circumſtance itſelf, ſo that his ſpeaking of it at large is occaſioned only by the openneſs of a companion; I ſay, in ſuch a caſe as this, it is not only pardonable, but agreeable, when a man takes the diſcourſe to himſelf: but when you ſee a fellow watch op-

portunities for being copious, it is exceſſively troubleſome.

It is an obſervation of Plutarch, that there is no member in human bodies, which nature has ſo ſtrongly incloſed within a double fortification, as the tongue, entrenched within with a barricado of ſharp teeth, to the end that when he refuſes to be ruled by reaſon, that holds the reins of ſilence within, we ſhould fix our teeth in it till the blood comes, rather than ſuffer the inordinate and unreaſonable din.

Γλώσσης τοι θησαυρὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἄριστος
Φείδωλῆς πλείστη δὲ χάρις καὶ μέτρον ἰδέσθαι,

ſays Heſiod: 'A provident tongue is a moſt valuable 'treaſure in man; and there is much grace in uſing 'it with diſcretion, and obſerving a medium.' But men that let their tongue run at random, rend and tear the ears with their tautologies; like thoſe, that after table-books have been newly cleanſed and wiped, deface them again with their impertinent ſcrawls and ſcratches. It was a good and ſeaſonable reproof of Ariſtotle's to an egregious prater, that had perplexed him with many abſurd ſtories, and concluded every one with this idle repetition, 'And 'is not this a wonderful thing, Ariſtotle? No wonder at all, ſaid the philoſopher, this; but if a man 'ſhould ſtand ſtill to hear you prate thus, who had 'two legs to run away, that were a wonder indeed.'

Another thing, that ſhould be a conſiderable mortification to theſe intemperate tatlers, is, that their diſcourſe is ſeldom heard with attention: for when there is no avoiding the vexation of one of theſe chattering fops, nature has afforded us this happineſs, that it is in the power of the ſoul, to lend the outward ears of the body, and endure the brunt of the noiſe, while ſhe retires to the remoter apartments of the mind, and there employs herſelf in better and more uſeful thoughts. Indeed, the undulation of the ſounds about my head, may, in ſome meaſure, interrup-

rupt my meditations, but even by thoſe imperfect ſnatches of thought, I am redeemed from being tortured with his whole loquacity.

May not a man that indulges himſelf in an immoderate humour of talking, be as juſtly ſaid to be inebriated with words, as another may be with wine? For he has really as little command of his tongue, as if the vapours of the liquor were mounted up to his brain; he is intoxicated with rattle, and his whole diſcourſe, as it were, runs a-head. The philoſophers, defining drunkenneſs, call it a delirium, or madneſs, through immoderate drinking of wine. So that drinking is not condemned, provided a man keep himſelf within the bounds of ſilence and moderation. Only vain and ſilly diſcourſe makes drinking of wine to be drunkenneſs.

They that make an ill and inconſiderate uſe of ſpeech, which is the moſt delightful means of human converſe, render it both troubleſome and unſociable; moleſting thoſe whom they think to gratify, derided by thoſe whoſe eſteem and admiration they covet, and offenſive to ſuch whoſe love and friendſhip they ſeek. Now, among all other maladies, and paſſions, ſome are dangerous, others hateful, and others ridiculous; but in fooliſh prating, all theſe inconveniencies concur. They are derided when they make relations of common matters; they are hated for bringing unwelcome tidings; and they are in danger for divulging of ſecrets. The tongue of one man prevented Rome from recovering her freedom, by the deſtruction of Nero: and families, cities, and ſtates, have been ruined by the looſe and inconſiderable babbling of thoſe, who had not the power of ſilence and ſecrecy.

It is a remark of Plutarch, that if the queſtion were to be aſked, which were the worſt and moſt pernicious ſort of people, he does not doubt but that every man would agree to ſay a traytor, that is not aſhamed to build his fortune on treachery, and the betraying of his country. And yet a prattler is a

ſort of traytor, whom no man needs to hire; for that he offers himſelf officiouſly, and of his own accord; nor does he betray to the enemy either horſe or walls; but whatever he knows of public or private concerns, requiring the greateſt ſecrecy, that he diſcloſes, whether it be in courts of judicature, in conſpiracies, or management of ſtate affairs; 'tis all one, he expects not ſo much as the reward of being thank'd for his pains; rather he will return thanks to them who give him audience.

I would not be conceived in what I have remarked ſo much to aim at rallying this intemperance of the tongue, as at reforming and making a cure of it. Yet no man will accuſtom himſelf to avoid, and, as it were, to extirpate out of his ſoul, a vice, till he has firſt view'd it with averſion. Nor can we ever deteſt thoſe evil habits of the mind as we ought to do, but when we rightly judge by reaſon's light, of the prejudice they do us, and ignominy we ſuſtain thereby. For example, we find that theſe profuſe babblers, deſirous of being beloved, are univerſally hated: while they ſtudy to gratify, they become troubleſome; and while they ſeek to be admired, they are derided. In ſhort, they injure their friends, advantage their enemies, and undo themſelves.

The likelieſt remedies to cure this ſpreading malady, are, to recollect in ourſelves the infamies and diſaſters which attend it, and to take into our ſerious conſideration the practice of what is quite oppoſite and contrary to it. Let us conſider how much more beloved, how much more admired, how far they are reputed to excell in prudence, who deliver their minds in few words, who contract their ſenſe within a ſmall compaſs of ſpeech, than ſuch as fly out into a ſcope of language, and ſuffer their tongues to run before their wit. But there is one impertinence, which, above all things, let us take ſpecial heed of not ſlipping into, that when another is aſked the queſtion, we do not chop in to prevent his returning an anſwer. Such a forwardneſs as this, is

not

not only indecent, but injurious and affrontive: for thereby, we ſeem to intimate, that the perſon to whom the queſtion was put, was not able to reſolve it; and that the propounder had not diſcretion ſufficient to know of whom to aſk it. Now, many times it happens, that we put queſtions to ſome people, not for want of an anſwer, but only to miniſter occaſion of diſcourſe, to provoke them to familiarity, and to have the pleaſure of their wit and converſation: therefore to prevent another in returning his anſwers, is the ſame thing as to run and ſalute a man, who deſigns to be ſaluted by ſomebody elſe; or to divert his eyes upon ourſelves, which were already fixed upon another. He that voluntarily preſumes to anſwer for another, gives diſtaſte, let his anſwer be never ſo rational; but if he miſtake, he is ſure to be derided by all the company.

A man, by nature, and ill habit, is given to much talk, ought to be extreamly careful, that he be not over haſty in his anſwers, to ſuch as provoke him to talk, on purpoſe to make themſelves merry, and to put an affront upon him. For ſome there are, who, not out of any deſire to be ſatisfied, but merely to paſs away the time, ſtudy certain queſtions, and then propound them to perſons who, they know, love to multiply words, on purpoſe to make themſelves ſport. Such men therefore ought to take heed how they run headlong, and leap into diſcourſe, as if they were glad of the occaſion; but to conſider the behaviour of the propounder, and the benefit and uſefulneſs of the queſtion.

It behoves a man that would return a pertinent anſwer, to ſtay till he rightly apprehends the ſenſe, and underſtands the intent of him that propounds the queſtion, for fear of running at random, or of giving one anſwer for another, for want of conſideration what he ought to ſay; which is the effect of an over-haſty zeal to be talking.

Beſides, the profuſe talker is of ſuch a diſpoſition, that if any diſcourſe happen, from which he

might be able to learn ſomething, and inform his ignorance, that he refuſes and rejects; nor can you hire him to hold his tongue; ſo that ſtill he will be flinging out his fooleries, as if he were maſter of all the knowledge in the world. We are not to eaſe and diſcharge ourſelves of our words, as if they were a heavy burthen which over-loaded us; for ſpeech remains as well when uttered, as before: it was given us to uſe for neceſſity, for inſtruction, and for civility, but never for ſuperfluity. Homer gives almoſt conſtantly to words the epithet of Winged: for he that lets go a bird out of his hand, does not eaſily catch her again: neither is it poſſible for a man to recall, and cage again in his breaſt, a word let ſlip from his mouth. It is a wiſe obſervation of the facetius Ovid,

—*Nulli* tacuiſſe *nocet*, *nocet eſſe* locutum.

Being ſilent never did any hurt; too much freedom of ſpeech has multiplied miſchiefs. How highly the virtue of taciturnity was eſteemed by the ancients, is plain from the injunction of the wiſe Pythagoras; his diſciples were to be ſilent for the firſt five years of their diſcipline; that by this compelled reſtriction, he might be a judge of their continence in trials of leſs difficulty, πάντων γὰρ χαλεπώταλόν ἐσιν ἐγκρατεύματων τὸ γλώτλης κρατειν, ſays Jamblicus; for to rule the tongue, is the hardeſt of all ſelf-ſubjection. The old poet Theognis has many rubs againſt garrulity, in his ſententious work: he ſays, 'That it is a great burden to a lover of prattle to 'hold his tongue; but that ſpeaking without fear 'or wit, as we ſay, he is as burdenſome to his com-'pany: that he is the general averſion; but that 'the mixture of ſuch a perſon is neceſſary for table-'talk at meetings of merriment.'

Κωτίλῳ

Κωτίλῳ ἀνθρώπῳ σιγᾶν χαλεπάλατον ἄχθος·
Φθηγγομένῳ δ' ἀδαὴς εἶσι παρὴ μέλεται.
Ἐχθαίρουσι δὲ πάντες ἀναγκαίη δ' ἐπίμιξις
Ἀνδρὸς τοιούτου συμποσίῳ τελέθει.

A reſtraint from ſuperfluous talk, does not imply, that we are to be ſullen, or moroſely ſilent: this, inſtead of a virtue, is ill-nature and obſtinacy; and may ſhew the reſerve more of a ſpy, than the guard of a prudent man. This then in a word, ſhould be our regulation: if there be nothing profitable in ſpeaking, nothing neceſſary to them that hear what is ſaid, nothing of ſatisfaction or delight, by being thereby rendered acceptable to all ſociety, then our talk will be but ſuperfluous: for words may be in vain, and to no purpoſe, as well as deeds: and we ſhould always remember with Simonides, that he who is given to talk, has many times an occaſion to repent him of his words, but never that he can hold his tongue.

IMPERTINENT CURIOSITY.

I Thought no ſubject could more properly follow a treatiſe of garrulity, than the impertinence of curioſity, which is ſo frequently co-incident with it; and into which we often fall, purely for a ſupply of matter to keep our tongues in motion: for there are a ſort of people, that deſire to hear a great deal of news, that they may have argument enough to prattle abroad: and theſe are the moſt diligent in the world to pry and divine into the ſecrets of others; which they afterwards enlarge and aggravate with ſome old ſtories and fooleries of their own: and then they are like children, that neither can endure to hold the ice in their hands, nor let it go.

Plutarch has related a ſtory of a barber, where this complication of loquacity and itch of intelligence are pleaſantly apparent: this man was the firſt who reported the news of the great overthrow which the Athenians received in Sicily: for, being the firſt that heard the relation of it in the Pyrœum, from a ſervant of one who had eſcaped out of battle, he preſently left his ſhop at ſixes and ſevens, and flew into the publickeſt parts of the city, for fear his account ſhould come but at ſecond hand. The ſurprize cauſed a great hubbub; and diligent enquiry was ſoon made after the firſt ſpreader of the news: the barber being brought to examination, could give no account of his author, only one that he never ſaw or knew in his life before, had

had told him the news. This incenſing the multitude, cords were immediately brought out, and the poor barber was tied neck and heels together. Soon after, the news of the defeat was confirmed by ſeveral that had made a hard ſhift to eſcape the ſlaughter. Upon this, the people were ſcattered every one to their own home, to make their private lamentation for their particular loſſes, and left the unfortunate barber faſt bound, in which condition he continued till late in the evening, and then was let looſe. Yet did not this reform the impertinence and inquiſitiveneſs of the fool; for no ſooner was he ſet at liberty, but he would needs be enquiring of the executioner what news, and what was reported of the manner of Nicias the general's being ſlain.

The Spectator has furniſhed us with a very natural characteriſtic of this ſpecies of impertinence: there is a creature, ſays he, who has all the organs of ſpeech, a tolerable good capacity for conceiving what is ſaid to it, together with a pretty proper behaviour in all the occurrences of common life; but naturally very vacant of thought in itſelf, and therefore forced to apply itſelf to foreign aſſiſtances. Of this make is that man who is very inquiſitive. You may often obſerve, that though he ſpeaks as good ſenſe as any man, upon any thing with which he is well acquainted, he cannot truſt to the range of his own fancy, to entertain himſelf upon that foundation, but goes on ſtill to new enquiries; and the moſt trivial diſcourſe is as welcome to a general enquirer, as any other of more conſequence could have been. The truth is, the inquiſitive are the funnels of converſation; they do not take in any thing for their own uſe, but merely to paſs it to another: they are the channels through which all the good and evil, that is ſpoken in town, are conveyed. Such as are offended at them, or think they ſuffer by their behaviour, may themſelves mend that inconvenience; for they are not a malicious people; and if you will ſupply them, you may contradict any thing they have ſaid before by their own mouths. As the inquiſitive are ſuch merely from

from a vacancy in their own imaginations, there is nothing, methinks, ſo dangerous, as to communicate ſecrets to them; for the ſame temper of enquiry makes them as impertinently communicative. But no man, though he converſes with them, need put himſelf in their power; for they will be contented with matters of leſs moment as well. Horace's caveat of them is particularly levelled at their intemperance of talking:

Percunctatorem fugito, nam garrulus idem eſt.

'Avoid the man that is fond of aſking queſtions, 'for he is as free in divulging what he learns.'

One too often ſees this humour accompanied with an inſatiable deſire of knowing what paſſes, without turning it to any uſe in the world but merely their own entertainment. This curioſity when it happens without malice or ſelf-intereſt, lays up in the imagination, a magazine of circumſtances, which cannot but entertain, when they are produced in converſation.

But there is a ſort of curioſity, which, by its ſtudious prying into the evils of mankind, ſeems to be a diſtemper of envy and ill-nature: this claſs of over-buſy people, neglecting ſuch obvious and common things, into which any man may enquire, and talk of, without offence, cannot be ſatisfied unleſs they rake into the private and concealed evils of every family in the neighbourhood. It was ſmartly ſaid by the Egyptian, who being aſked, 'What it was he carried ſo cloſely,' replied, 'It was therefore covered, that it might be ſecret.' An anſwer, which might ſerve to check the curioſity of thoſe impertinent men, who will be always peeping into the privacy of others.

If the knowledge of ill can reward the induſtrious ſearch with delight and pleaſure, we ſhould turn the point of our curioſity upon ourſelves, and our own affairs, and we ſhall within doors find matter enough for the moſt laborious enquiries. Every man that would make an exact enquiry into, and take a juſt account

count of himſelf, ſhould firſt make a particular ſearch into the ſeveral miſchiefs that proceed from each paſſion within him, whether it be envy or jealouſy, covetouſneſs or cowardice, or any other vicious inclination; and then diſtribute and range them all, as it were, into diſtinct apartments. Here this inquiſitive and buſy diſpoſition may find an employment that will be of uſe and advantage, and is neither ill-natured, nor impertinent, while every man ſhall call himſelf to this ſtrict examination.

But we, through extreme ſloth and ignorance, being ſtupidly careleſs of our own affairs, muſt be idly ſpending our time, and talk either about our neighbour's pedigree or concerns. To ſome ſort of men their own life and actions would appear the moſt unpleaſant ſpectacle in the world; and therefore they fly from the light of their conſcience, and cannot bear the torture of one reflecting thought upon themſelves. For when the ſoul being once defiled with all manner of wickedneſs, is ſcared at its own hideous deformity, it endeavours to run from itſelf, and ranging here and there, pampers its own malignity with malicious ſpeculations on the ills of others.

There is likewiſe another ſect of the inquiſitive, which is that of the buſy-body: this man undertakes as much, as he performs little. He will thruſt himſelf forward to be the guide of the way he knows not; and calls at his neighbour's window, and aſks why his ſervants are not at work. The market hath no commodity which he prizeth not, and which the next table ſhall not hear recited. His tongue, like the tails of Sampſon's foxes, carries firebrands, and is enough to ſet the whole field of the world on a flame. Himſelf begins table-talk of his neighbour at another's board; to whom he bears the firſt news, and adjures him to conceal the reporter. There can no act paſs without his comment, which is ever far-fetched, raſh, ſuſpicious, and dilatory. His ears are long, and his eyes quick, but moſt of all to imperfections: which as he eaſily ſees, ſo he encreaſes with intermeddling. He

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hates conſtancy as an earthern dullneſs unfit for men of ſpirit; and loves to change his work and his place: neither yet can he be ſo ſoon weary of any place, as every place is weary of him: he labours without thanks, talks without credit, lives without love, and dies without pity; ſave that ſome will ſay, it was pity he died no ſooner.

There are other perſons whoſe curioſity is confined to news and public tranſactions: theſe buſtle among the crouds that throng the courts, exchanges, and wharfs, and pick up all the idle ſtories that are dropt in the coffee-houſe. They go about pumping, 'What 'news d'ye hear? Were not you upon the exchange 'to day, Sir? The city's in a very tickliſh poſture, 'what d'ye think on't? In two or three hours time 'we may be all together by the ears.' Men of this ſtamp, if they are riding poſt, will light off their horſe, and even hug and kiſs a fellow that has a ſtory to tell them, and ſtay never ſo long till they hear it out.

It was a good piece of policy among the Locrians to prevent this ſort of unreaſonable impatience, that if any perſon coming from abroad ſhould but once aſk concerning news, he was preſently confined for his curioſity. For inquiſitive people, that deal much in news, are ever longing for innovations, alterations, variety of action, or any thing that is miſchievous and unlucky, that they may find ſtore of game for their reſtleſs ill-nature to hunt and prey upon. Charondas the law-giver puniſhed adultery and this malignant curioſity in the like manner: and indeed there is an affinity in the vices; for as adultery is nothing elſe but the curioſity of diſcovering another man's ſecret pleaſures, and the itch of knowing what is hidden; and curioſity is (as it were) a rape and violence committed upon other peoples privacies.

I have obſerved that the ſame curioſity which is thus inquiſitive to know, is generally no leſs intemperate in talking too, and muſt needs be as ill-ſpoken, as it is ill-natured. And hence it happens, that it does

does not only become a reſtraint to the vices and follies of others, but is a diſappointment alſo to itſelf. For all mankind is exceeding ſhy of inquiſitive perſons; no ſerious buſineſs is conſulted of where they are; and if they chance to ſurprize men in the negotiation of any affair, it is preſently laid aſide; nor is any thing of moment ſaid or done in their company.

To diſſuade inquiſitive perſons from this ſneaking and moſt deſpicable humour, it would contribute much, if they would but recollect and review all their paſt obſervations; if they would but now and then look into their bag of news, they would certainly be aſhamed of that vain and fooliſh curioſity, which had been gathering together ſuch a confuſed heap of worthleſs traſh. If they who curiouſly enquire into thoſe vicious deformities, and unlucky accidents, that may be obſerved in the lives and characters of men, would only bind themſelves to a frequent recollection of what they had ſeen and heard, there would be found very little delight or advantage in ſuch ungrateful and melancholy reflections.

Now, ſince it is from the uſe and cuſtom of intermeddling in the affairs of other men, that this perverſe practice grows up into ſuch a vicious habit, we ought gradually to bring ourſelves to an utter diſuſe of enquiring into, or being concerned at any of thoſe things that do not pertain unto us: for men ſuffering their minds to rove inconſiderately at every thing they ſee, are inured to a fooliſh curioſity in buſying themſelves about matters impertinent. Perſons of an inquiſitive temper ought to reſtrain the wanton excurſions of their curioſity, and confine it to obſervations of prudence and ſobriety; to preſerve thoſe noble faculties of wit and underſtanding, which were made for uſeful and excellent enquiries, from being dulled and debauched with low and ſottiſh ſpeculations.

We ſhould never accuſtom ourſelves in paſſing, to peep into other people's doors or windows, becauſe the

the eye may reach what the hand cannot, and wander where the foot does not come. The ſtaring and glancing of the eyes to and fro, implies ſuch a levity of mind, and ſo great a defect in good manners, as muſt needs render the practice in itſelf very clowniſh and contemptible. It is not ſeemly, that the ſenſe, which ought to behave itſelf as an handmaid to the ſoul, in doing its errands faithfully, returning ſpeedily, and keeping at home with ſubmiſſive and reſerved modeſty, ſhould be ſuffered, like a wanton and ungovernable ſervant, to be gadding abroad from her miſtreſs, and ſtraying about at her pleaſure.

The ſenſes not exerciſed, and well managed, will at every turn, break looſe into wild excurſions, and hurry reaſon along with them into the ſame extravagance. But when a man hath by eaſy and gradual diſcipline, acquired ſome power over himſelf, the difficulty of reſiſting the ſpirit of inquiſitiveneſs will leſſen upon his hands; and to ſecure him from a relapſe into folly, he need but reflect, how little there is to be gained by intermeddling with buſy and unquiet people, and how great the certain advantage is of bridling our curioſity, and bringing it under ſubjection to the commands of reaſon. Give me leave to inſert two inſtances of the vaſt controul which two as great men as the world has produced, had over themſelves on tempting occaſions: when Araſpes had commended the fair Panthea to Cyrus, as a beauty worth his admiration, he replied, 'For 'that very reaſon I will not ſee her, leſt, if by thy 'perſuaſion, I ſhould ſee her but once, ſhe herſelf 'might perſuade me to ſee her often, and ſpend 'more time with her, than would be for the advan-'tage of my own affairs.' So Alexander, upon a like conſideration, would not truſt his eyes in the preſence of the beauteous queen of Perſia, but kept himſelf out of the reach of her charms, and treated only with her aged mother. Theſe, as they were peculiar acts of continence, ſo were they as abſolute checks of curioſity; which never ſleeps in youthful

ful breaſts, when beauty gives the alarm to the blood.

The exceſſes of our curioſity will yet more eaſily be cured, if inſtead of enquiring into what concerns other men, we can prevail with ourſelves ſo far, as not to ſee or hear all that is done in our own houſes, nor to liſten to every thing that may be told us, concerning our ſelves or our private affairs. Human nature is ſo eaſily diſcompoſed, our tempers ruffled, and paſſions rouſed, that we ſhould be cautious of ſeeking occaſions of diſquiet. There are circumſtances enough of vexation in every one's affairs, which cannot be diſguiſed or kept ſecret: and only fools and madmen can be excuſed for labouring to ſtir up freſh afflictions, and add an increaſe to ſorrow and uneaſineſs. If it were but for this one reaſon, 'tis plain, we ought to regulate our curioſity, and contend againſt an humour of impertinence, whoſe conſequences are not trivial: and if this one vice be not corrected, 'twill be fruitleſs to ſubdue our other paſſions: for while we indulge ourſelves in enquiring, ſifting, and canvaſing every trifle, we ſhall be under a neceſſity of employing our anger and ſuſpicions; be drawn into jealouſies of being made properties; and uſe baſe and ungenerous ſubtleties to do ourſelves juſtice.

PRIDE.

PRIDE.

THERE is no paſſion which ſteals into the heart more imperceptibly, and covers itſelf under more diſguiſes, than pride: ſo that the beſt way to know whether we are guilty of this vice, or not, and to prevent our charging this odious imputation upon others unjuſtly, is, to ſtate the nature of pride, and enquire into the grounds of it.

Pride is originally founded on ſelf-love; which is the moſt intimate and inſeparable paſſion of human nature. The kindneſs men have for themſelves, is apt to put them upon over-valuing their own things; which humour, unleſs check'd in time, will make them take moſt delight in thoſe circumſtances and actions which diſtinguiſh them from their neighbours, and place their ſuppoſed advantages in the beſt light. By this ſelf-love, we are to underſtand the exceſſes of it; for otherwiſe 'tis impoſſible for a man not to be proud, becauſe 'tis impoſſible for a man not to love himſelf: but we certainly do love ourſelves too well, as often as we ſet an over-proportioned and unuſual value upon any thing becauſe 'tis our own; as if our fondneſs and partiality were the true ſtandards of worth, and we had the faculty of turning every thing we touched into gold. This is an argument that a man does not delight in an advantage ſo much for itſelf, as for the compariſon; not ſo much for its

its own reſpective goodneſs, as becauſe others want it.

Pride, to define it in the plaineſt words, is too high an opinion of our own excellency. We may be aſſured, we have this diſeaſe, when we value any perſon chiefly becauſe his advantages are of the ſame nature with thoſe we enjoy; neglecting others who have an equal right to regard, only becauſe their privileges are of a different kind from our own. We may as certainly conclude ourſelves infected with this vice, when we invade the rights of our neighbour, not upon the account of covetouſneſs, but of dominion; only that we may have it in our power to create dependencies, and to give another that which is already his own. And another infallible ſymptom is, when men love to make themſelves the ſubject of diſcourſe; to con over their pedigrees, and obtrude the blazon of their exploits upon the company: this is an argument they are over-grown with conceit, and very much ſmitten with themſelves.

There is no affection of the mind ſo much blended in human nature, and wrought into our very conſtitution, as pride. It appears under multitude of diſguiſes, and breaks out in ten thouſand different ſymptoms. Every one feels it in himſelf, and yet wonders to ſee it in his neighbour. There is no temptation to it from the reflection of our being in general, or upon any comparative perfection, whereby one man may excel another. The greater a man's knowledge is, the greater motive he may ſeem to have for pride; but in the ſame proportion as the one riſes, the other ſinks, it being the chief office of wiſdom to diſcover to us our weakneſs and imperfections.

There is an admirable ſentence in holy writ, which ſays that 'pride was not made for man.' There is not indeed any ſingle view of human nature, under its preſent condition, which is not ſufficient to extinguiſh in us all the ſecret ſeeds of pride; and on the contrary, to ſink the ſoul into the loweſt ſtate of humility; and what the ſchool-men call ſelf-annihilation.

tion. There is nothing in his underſtanding, in his will, or in his preſent condition, that can tempt any conſiderate creature to pride or vanity. And yet the very reaſons why he ſhould not be proud, are notwithſtanding the reaſons why he is ſo. Were not he a ſinful creature, he would not be ſubject to a paſſion which riſes from the depravity of his nature; were he not an ignorant creature, he would ſee that he has nothing to be proud of; and were not the whole ſpecies miſerable, he would not have thoſe wretched objects of compariſon before his eyes; which are the occaſions of this paſſion; and which make one man value himſelf more than another.

If there be any thing which makes human nature appear ridiculous to beings of ſuperior faculties, it muſt be pride. They know ſo well the vanity of thoſe imaginary perfections that ſwell the heart of man, and of thoſe little ſupernumerary advantages, whether in birth, fortune, or title, which one man enjoys above another, and it muſt certainly very much aſtoniſh, if it does not very much divert them, when they ſee a mortal puffed up, and valuing himſelf above his neighbours on any of theſe accounts, at the ſame time that he is obnoxious to all the common calamities of the ſpecies. May we not imagine, that beings of ſuperior natures and perfections regard all the inſtances of pride and vanity, among our own ſpecies, in the ſame kind of view, when they take a ſurvey of thoſe who inhabit the earth; or, in the language of an ingenious French poet, of thoſe piſmires that people this heap of dirt, which human vanity has divided into climates and regions?

Now, as we are not to be conceited, or preſume highly on the poſſeſſion of any advantages, ſo neither are we to be ignorant of our talents and virtues. 'Tis no part of pride to be conſcious of any perfections we have, either intellectual or moral; for this is, in many caſes, neceſſary, and impoſſible to be avoided. But ſuppoſing it was poſſible for a man to be ignorant of his good qualities, it could by no means

means be convenient: for if he carried ſuch a treaſure about him, without knowing how well furniſhed he was, 'tis ſomewhat hard to conceive how he could either improve or uſe it. We may be acquainted with our own accompliſhments, without being guilty of pride; and it is no branch of that ſin, to diſcover that they are greater than ſome of our neighbours enjoy: neither do we fall into a crime, by being delighted with thoſe advantages of mind, body, or fortune, which Providence has given us: theſe things, in the very notion of them, are ſuppoſed to be beneficial. 'Tis natural and neceſſary for us to be pleaſed with the enjoyment of that which is good, of that which is agreeable to our faculties, and an advancement of our nature. But our pleaſure upon theſe accounts, is ſeldom ſincere and as it ought to be, our delight is a ſort of arrogance; we look big on the bleſſings, account them the reſults of merit, and contemn all that are not on the level with us. Beſides, we never ſeek happineſs in ourſelves, but in the opinion of men, whom we know to be flatterers, inſincere, unjuſt, envious, ſuſpicious, and prepoſſeſſed: unaccountable folly!

The world is full of people, who making by cuſtom and outward appearance a compariſon of themſelves with others, always decide in favour of their own merit, and act accordingly. So they deſign ſometimes to conceal their imperfections, or leſſen the opinion we have of them, by confeſſing them freely. A vain man finds his account in ſpeaking good, or ill, of himſelf; a modeſt man never talks of himſelf. We cannot better comprehend the ridiculouſneſs of vanity, and what a ſhameful vice it is, than by obſerving how afraid it is to be ſeen, and how often it hides itſelf under the appearance of modeſty.

There is either no ſuch thing as modeſty, or it is confounded with ſomething in itſelf quite different. If we take it for an internal ſentiment, which makes a man ſeem mean in his own eyes, this is a

ſupernatural virtue, and we call it humility. Man naturally thinks proudly and haughtily of himſelf, and thinks thus of no body but himſelf. Modeſty only tends to qualify this diſpoſition; it is an external virtue which governs our eyes, conduct, words, tone of voice, and obliges a man to act with others to outward appearance, as if it was not true that he deſpiſed them. Falſe modeſty is the moſt refined ſort of vanity; it makes the vain man never appear ſuch; on the contrary, raiſes a reputation by the virtue quite oppoſite to the vice which forms this character: 'tis hypocriſy. Falſe glory is the ſtumbling-block of vanity: it tempts people to acquire eſteem by things which they indeed poſſeſs, but are frivolous and unbecoming a man to value himſelf on: 'tis an error. All men, in their hearts covet eſteem, yet are loth any one ſhould diſcover their fondneſs to be eſteemed; becauſe men would paſs for virtuous, that they may draw ſome other advantages from it, beſides virtue itſelf; I would ſay, eſteem and praiſe. This ſhould no longer be thought virtue, but a love for praiſe and eſteem, or vanity. Men are very vain creatures; and of all things, hate to be thought ſo.

Pride frequently conſiſts in an oſtentation of habit or circumſtances; in being above others in the gifts of fortune, and making a ſhew they cannot come up to: but another, as general branch of pride, is lodged in what we call perſonal merit, in ambitious thoughts of our own accompliſhment, a leaning after popular applauſe, and a vain-glorious itch of praiſe and commendation. He that talks big and arrogantly of himſelf, is univerſally condemned as a troubleſome and ill-bred companion. 'Tis true, 'a man's praiſes 'have very muſical and charming accents in ano-'ther's mouth; but very flat and untuneable in his 'own,' ſays Xenophon: for we brand them as impudent, who commend themſelves; it becoming them to be modeſt, though they were praiſed by others; and account them unjuſt in arrogating that to themſelves, which another has the ſole property of beſtowing

ſlowing on them. The praiſe therefore is vain, which a man heaps upon himſelf, to provoke others alſo to praiſe him; and is chiefly contemptible, as proceeding from an importunate and unreaſonable affectation of eſteem.

Yet, however, there is a time when a generous and prudent man may be the ſubject of his own diſcourſe, and give a free relation of things he has worthily done or ſaid, as well as other truths. Self-praiſe is not liable to diſgrace or blame, when 'tis delicately handled by way of apology, to remove a calumny or accuſation. We may fairly ſound the trumpet of our own deſerts, when our reputations are either attacked or undermined by detraction or envy. Apologies claim a great liberty of ſpeech and boaſting, as conſiderable parts of their defence.

Now, as ſkilful painters, that they may not offend the eye, allay their over-bright and gaudy colours, by tempering them with darker, ſo there are ſome who will not repreſent their own praiſes altogether glaring, and immoderately ſplendid, but caſt in ſome defects, ſome ſcapes, or ſlight faults, to take away the danger of diſpleaſure or envy. And for the moſt part, 'tis a good antidote againſt envy, to mix amongſt our praiſes thoſe faults that are not altogether ungenerous and baſe.

Indeed, diſcourſe of a man's ſelf uſually ſallies from ſelf-love, as from its fort; and is there obſerved to lay wait, even in thoſe who are vulgarly thought free enough from ambition. Therefore as it is one of the rules of health to avoid dangerous and unwholeſome places, or being in them, to take the greater care, ſo it ought to be like a rule concerning converſe and ſpeaking of one's ſelf. For this kind of talk has ſlippery occaſions, into which we unawares, and indiſcernably are apt to fall.

For ambition uſually intrudes with ſome flouriſhing remarks to adorn herſelf: let a perſon be commended by his equal or inferior, the mind of the ambitious is tickled and rubbed at the hearing of

his praiſe, and immediately he is hurried by an intemperate deſire and precipitation after the like; as the appetite of the hungry is ſharpened by ſeeing others eat.

Our defects and follies are too often unknown to us: nay, they are ſo far from being known to us, that they paſs for demonſtrations of our worth. This makes us eaſy in the midſt of them, fond to ſhew them, fond to improve in them, and to be eſteemed for them. Then it is that a thouſand unaccountable conceits, gay inventions, and extravagant actions muſt afford us pleaſures, and diſplay us to others in the colours which we ourſelves take a fancy to glory in. Such ſorcery have error and popular opinion, and ſo famous are they for bewitching people with the love of themſelves. There is no paſſion ſo univerſal, however diverſified or diſguiſed under different forms and appearances, as the vanity of being known to the reſt of mankind, and communicating a man's parts, virtues, or qualifications to the world: yet there is a call upon mankind to value and eſteem thoſe who ſet a moderate price upon their own merit; and ſelf-denial is frequently attended with unexpected bleſſings, which in the end abundantly recompenſe ſuch loſſes as the modeſt ſeem to ſuffer in the ordinary occurrences of life. The curious tell us, a determination in our favour, or to our diſadvantage, is made upon our firſt appearance, even before they know any thing of our characters, but from the intimations men gather from our aſpect. A man, they ſay, wears the picture of his mind in his countenance, and one man's eyes are ſpectacles to his who looks at him, to read his heart. But though that way of raiſing an opinion of thoſe we behold in public is very fallacious, certain it is, that thoſe who by their words and actions take as much upon themſelves, as they can but barely demand in the ſtrict ſcrutiny of their deſerts, will find their account leſſen every day. A modeſt man preſerves his character, as a frugal man does his fortune; if either

of

of them live to the height of either, one will find loſſes, the other errors, which he has not a ſtock by him to make up. It were therefore a juſt rule to keep our deſires, our words, and actions, within the regard we obſerve our friends have for us; and never, if it were in a man's power, to take as much as we poſſibly might, either in preferment or reputation. He that in his air, his treatment of others, or an habitual arrogance to himſelf, gives himſelf credit for the leaſt article of more wit, wiſdom, goodneſs, or valour, than he can poſſibly produce, if he is called upon, will find the world break in upon him, and conſider him as one who has cheated them of all the eſteem they had before allowed him.

But if there were no ſuch conſiderations, as the good effect which ſelf-denial has upon the ſenſe of other men towards us, it is of all qualities the moſt deſireable for the agreeable diſpoſition which it places in our own minds. I cannot tell what to ſay better of it, than that it is the very contrary of ambition; and that modeſty allays all thoſe paſſions and inquietudes to which that vice expoſes us. He has no emulation; he is no man's rival, but every man's well-wiſher; can look at a proſperous man with a pleaſure, in reflecting that he hopes he is as happy as himſelf: and has his mind and his fortune (as far as prudence will allow) open to the unhappy and to the ſtranger.

I cannot advance the merit of modeſty by any argument of my own ſo powerfully, as by enquiring into the ſentiments the greateſt amongſt the ancients of different ages entertained upon this virtue. If we go back to the days of Solomon, we ſhall find favour a neceſſary conſequence to a ſhameface man. Pliny, the greateſt lawyer, and moſt elegant writer of the age he lived in, in ſeveral of his epiſtles, is very ſollicitous in recommending to the public ſome young men of his own profeſſion, and very often underſtands to become an advocate, upon condition that ſome one of theſe his favourites might be joined

with him, in order to produce the merit of ſuch whoſe modeſty otherwiſe would have ſuppreſſed it. It may ſeem very wonderful to an arrogant modern, that *multum ſanguinis, multum verecundiæ, multum ſolicitudinis in ore*; to have the face firſt full of blood, then the countenance daſhed with modeſty, and then the whole aſpect of one dying with fear, when a man begins to ſpeak, ſhould be eſteemed by Pliny the neceſſary qualifications of a fine ſpeaker.

But leaſt an eulogium on modeſty may ſeem a digreſſion in a treatiſe upon pride, I ſhall beg leave to conſider it in the view of humility, which is the direct oppoſite of this vice. The humble man though he be not out of his own favour, no man ſets ſo low a value on his own worth as himſelf; not out of ignorance or careleſſneſs; but of a voluntary and meek dejectedneſs. His eyes are full of his own wants, and others perfections: he loveth rather to give than to take honour; not in a faſhion of complimental courteſy, but in ſimplicity of his judgment; when he hath but his due, he magnifieth courteſy, and diſclaimeth his deſerts. His face, his carriage, his habit, ſavour of lowlineſs without affectation, and yet he is much under that he ſeemeth. There is no better object of beneficence; for what he receives, he aſcribes merely to the bounty of the giver, nothing to merit. He emulates no man in any thing but goodneſs, and that with more deſire than hope to overtake. In a word, he is as a lowly valley, ſweetly planted, and well watered; the proud man's earth, whereon he tramples; but ſecretly full of wealthy mines, more worth than he that walks over them.

This is the character of the humble man; let us now take a view of the proud and arrogant one. All his humour riſes up into the froth of oſtentation, which if it once ſettle, falls down into a narrower room. He is proud even of another man's horſe; and well mounted, thinks every man wrongs him that looks not at him. A bare head in the ſtreet doth him

him more good than a meal's meat; he picks his teeth when his ſtomach is empty, and calls for pheaſants at a common inn; you ſhall find him prizing the richeſt jewels, and the faireſt horſes, when his purſe yields not money enough for earneſt. He thruſts himſelf into the preſs before ſome great ladies; and loves to be ſeen near the head of a great train. His talk is, how many mourners he furniſhed with cloaks at his father's funeral; how rich his coat is; and how ancient, how great his alliance; how ſignal his exploits; and when he has commended others buildings, furniture, or ſuits, compares them with his own. When he has undertaken to be broker for ſome rich jewel, he wears it; and pulling off his glove to ſtroke up his hair, thinks no eye ſhould have any other object. Entertaining his friends, he chides his cook for no better chear; and names the diſhes he meant and wants. To conclude his character, he is ever on the ſtage, and acts ſtill a glorious part abroad, when no man carries a baſer heart, no man is more ſordid and careleſs at home. He is a Spaniſh ſoldier on an Italian theatre; a bladder full of wind, a ſkin full of words, a fool's wonder, and a wiſe man's fool.

The inſtability of human affairs, the turns and viciſſitudes of fortune, and the ſudden falls from the moſt ſwoln ambition, are ſubjects which ought to diſcountenance our pride; Shakeſpear has an admirable paſſage on this head, which deſerves a place in all moral writings.

Farewel, a long farewel to all my greatneſs!
This is the ſtate of man; to day, he puts forth
The tender leaves of hopes; to-morrow bloſſoms
And bears his bluſhing honours thick upon him;
The third day comes a froſt, a killing froſt;
And when he thinks, good eaſy man, full ſurely,
His greatneſs is a ripening, nips his root,
And then he falls as I do. I have ventur'd
(Like little wanton boys, that ſwim on bladders)

Th[illegible]many a ſummer in a ſea of glory,
But far beyond my depth: my high-blown pride
At length broke under me, and now has left me,
Weary and old with ſervice, to the mercy
Of a rude ſtream, that muſt for ever hide me.

The moſt plauſible pretences for thoughts of pride, are learning, nobility, and power, as they are in general accounted the brighteſt and moſt diſtinguiſhing advantages: yet I believe there is much more weight laid upon them, than in ſtrict reaſon they will bear. Learning and high conceit agree very ill together; for a man of letters muſt have a clear notion of the ſtupidneſs and deformity of this vice; and being better acquainted with the frame and paſſions of human nature, he cannot chuſe but diſcover how unacceptable it muſt make him to all mankind. Beſides that learning gives us a fuller conviction of the imperfection of our nature; which one would think might diſpoſe us to modeſty. The more a man knows, the more he diſcovers his ignorance. He can ſcarce look upon any part of the creation, but he finds himſelf encompaſſed with doubts and difficulties. He knows he has a being, 'tis true; and ſo does a peaſant; but what this thing is which he calls himſelf, is hard to ſay. And as the more refined underſtandings know little or nothing of themſelves, and of this material world; ſo, upon enquiry, we ſhall find them as defective in their ſkill about moral truths. We ſee how unaccountably the public conſtitutions of nations vary; as if right and wrong lay in the fancies of men, rather than in the reaſons of things. The heathen philoſophers may fairly be granted to have as good pretences to learning, as any other ſort of men among them; and yet what a ſmall proportion of ſolid knowledge were they maſters of? How ſtrangely did they differ in matters of the higheſt import, how eagerly diſpute, and not without probability on both ſides? It were tedious to recount the differences one ſect had with another,

another, their inconſiſtencies with themſelves, and the ridiculous and ill ſupported tenets ſome of the moſt famous of them have held. Indeed the more modeſt of them would confeſs, that the chief uſe of learning was to give us a fuller diſcovery of our ignorance, and to keep us from being peremptory and dogmatical in our determinations. Now one would imagine the more intimate acquaintance we had with the imperfections of our nature, the greater reaſon we ſhould have to be humble. Is weakneſs a proper foundation to erect our lofty conceits upon? Indeed he that has not the leiſure or capacity to examine how it is with him, may be fondly perſuaded to fancy himſelf ſomebody, and grow vain upon the kind preſumption: but for a man to be proud, who can demonſtrate his own poverty, is little leſs than madneſs.

But granting that learning does give ſome advantage, and that our underſtandings are really enriched by it, yet in regard we have but a few principles to build upon, the greateſt part of our knowledge muſt conſiſt in inferences; which cannot be wrought out without great labour and attention of mind. Therefore have we no reaſon to be proud of what we have gotten; for is it not an humbling conſideration to reflect what pains we are obliged to take to muſter up our forces, and to make that little reaſon we have ſerviceable? I agree, that a man may lawfully maintain his character and juſt pretences againſt rudeneſs and ignorance; but when he converſes with people of ſenſe and modeſty, his opinion of his own worth ſhould but juſt dawn upon them, and at moſt give them but a remote notice that he expected any ſingular acknowledgment. If ſenſe and learning are unſociable and imperious things, a good-natured man ought to take ſpecial care not to improve too faſt. He ought to keep down the growth of his reaſon, and curb his intellectuals, when he finds them ready to out-ſtrip his neighbours.

Now ſince learning and conceit make ſo odd a figure, let us proceed to examine the pretences of nobility;

for I am afraid the vulgar notion of it is ſcrewed ſomewhat too high, and that it has not ballaſt enough to carry all the ſail which is commonly made out. All men were equally noble, and equally Plebeian at firſt; and I would gladly underſtand how they came to be ſo much diſtinguiſhed afterwards. If we trace the records of old hiſtory, and the fabulous ages, we ſhall find that it has been often founded upon rapine and injuſtice. Thucidides relates, That in ancient times, it was counted an heroic atchievement to plunder luſtily; and he was a man of the beſt quality, who was able to ſteal moſt cattle. Theſe Nimrods grew great by the ſtrength of their limbs, and their vices; engraved their murders upon their ſhields, and hectored all the little and peaceable people into peaſantry.

But to wave ſo chimerical a riſe of diſtinction, we will ſuppoſe its original equitable, and divide nobility into two kinds, hereditary and acquired: the firſt is tranſmitted to us from our anceſtors; the other is immediately conferred by the favour of the prince.

Hereditary nobility ſeems no juſt ground for an high opinion, becauſe it is borrowed. Thoſe great actions which we had no ſhare in, cannot properly be any part of our commendation, eſpecially if we want abilities to imitate them. He that depends wholly upon the worth of others, ought to conſider, that he has but the honour of an image, and is worſhipped not for his own ſake, but upon the account of what he repreſents. It is a ſign a man is very poor, when he has nothing of his own to appear in, but is forced to patch up his figure with the relics of the dead, and rifle tombſtones and monuments, for reputation. The addreſs of Juvenal, to this high rank of mankind, is certainly juſt.——

Ergo ut miremur Te non Tua, primum aliquid da,
Quod poſſim titulis incidere, præter Honores
Quos illis damus, & dedimus, quibus omnia debes.

'If you would have your pre-eminence admired in 'yourſelf, and not for your predeceſſor's worth, give 'ſome

'ſome ſpecimen of perſonal merit, that may ſignalize 'your character more than thoſe honours, which we 'have always given to them from whom you derive 'your nobility.' Is it a real advantage, or what ſhould excite us to high-flown thoughts, that we ſtand at the bottom of a long parchment pedigree, and are ſome yards removed from the firſt eſcutcheon? That our family is ſo ſubſtantially built, that it has ſtood the ſhock of time, and held out againſt all variety of accidents? That our anceſtors have flouriſhed in honour and reputation, and had intereſt and command in their country for ſo many generations? To what do theſe fine valuations in reality amount? If we are capable of underſtanding any thing, it muſt undoubtedly be more creditable to promote good humour and modeſty in converſation, and give men right apprehenſions of themſelves, than to flatter them into groundleſs conceits, and make them believe that they may be truly great, and yet good for nothing. To maintain ſuch indefenſable and dangerous principles of honour, which not only impoſe upon our underſtandings, but emaſculate our ſpirits, and ſpoil our temper, and tend only to the nouriſhing of idleneſs and pride, is no very heroical undertaking. No perſon can be great by being owner of thoſe things, which wiſe men have always counted it a piece of greatneſs to deſpiſe: nor is it the poſſeſſion, but the right management of any valuable advantage, which makes us conſiderable: and he that does not employ his fortune generouſly, is not to be reſpected merely becauſe he has it.

But if we are not to be proud of hereditary honours and titles owing to birth-right and anceſtry, yet ſure it may be objected, acquired nobility gives us ſome larger pretences of triumphing: here is no gilding of a coarſe ſubſtance, no borrowed glory, no faint reflection from an anceſtor, but the man is all bright and luminous to the center, and ſhines and ſparkles in his own worth. He is not great by genealogy and ancient title, by the favour of fortune, and the labours of thoſe he never helped, but by nature and performances; by having

greatneſs incorporated in himſelf. To ſtate the caſe in this manner, is, indeed putting in a plauſible plea for oſtentation: but ſuppoſing a man has obliged the public, is remarkable for great abilities, and lights on promotion in honour or office; let him remember that there are others who have ventured as far, and performed as conſiderably as himſelf, whoſe ſervices all miſcarried as to any private advantage; becauſe they were not ſo lucky as to act under the notice of thoſe who were able to reward. Let him check and reſtrain his pride with this conſideration, That many perſons, as well furniſhed as himſelf for employment and honour, go out of the world as obſcurely as they came in, only for want of a proper opportunity to bring them into light, and public view: becauſe a man has received a valuable conſideration for his ſervices in honour or eſtate, therefore ſhall he preſs too arbitrarily on the world, for ſubmiſſion? Shall he ſet a tax upon converſation, and put the company under contribution for reſpect?

The beſt way for real merit to ſecure obſervance, is, not to inſiſt too violently upon it; for pride is a moſt unfortunate vice. Other immoralities uſually gain their point, though they loſe more another way: but a proud man is ſo far from making himſelf great by his haughty and contemptuous port, that he is uſually puniſhed with neglect for it: and that diſdain with which he treats others, is returned more juſtly upon himſelf. Greatneſs does not conſiſt in pageantry and ſhew, in pomp and retinue: theſe are but the trappings and indications of grandeur; and though a perſon of quality will make uſe of theſe things, to avoid ſingularity, and put the vulgar in mind of their obedience to authority, yet he does not think himſelf really the bigger for them: for he knows that thoſe who have neither honeſty nor underſtanding, have oftentimes all this fine furniture about them. To be great is not to be ſtarched, and ſupercilious; to ſwagger at footmen, and brow-beat inferiors. Such a behaviour looks as if a man was conſcious of his own inſignificancy,

cancy, and that he had nothing but outside, and noise, and ill humour, to make himself considerable with. He that is truly noble, has far different sentiments, and turns his figure quite another way; is equally removed from the extreams of servility and pride; is above abridging the liberties, or depressing the spirits of his dependants, to proclaim his superiority; and and values his greatness more for the good it empowers him to do, than the respect it procures to be paid to him.

After I have endeavoured to describe pride in its several forms of ambition, vanity, ostentation, and vain-glory, it would be impertinent to run a discourse with you, upon the inconveniences of it; or to shew you in particular, what an unconquerable aversion it gives all mankind against us, when we are over-grown with it. Let it suffice for a conclusion, that it multiplies and conceals our defects from us, and makes us do a thousand silly things, without taking notice of them; that it makes us a prey to flatterers, and puts us to great expences, only to be laughed at; that it spoils conversation, and takes away the pleasure of society; that families, kingdoms, and churches, are embroiled by it, and the world turned top-syturvy by this vice.

In short, we ought only to be proud of supporting our characters in religion and morality, of endeavouring to do our duties to God, and our neighbour, and being above an action which may debase our nature, and make us liable to the censure of profaneness, folly, or immorality.

CON-

CONTENTMENT.

ENQUIRIES after happineſs, and rules for attaining it, are not ſo neceſſary and uſeful to mankind, as the arts of conſolation, and ſupporting one's ſelf under affliction. The utmoſt we can hope for in this world, is contentment: if we aim at any thing higher, we ſhall meet with nothing but grief and diſappointments: a man ſhould direct all his ſtudies and endeavours at making himſelf eaſy now, and happy hereafter.

The truth of it is, if all the happineſs that is diſperſed through the whole race of mankind in this world, were drawn together, and put into the poſſeſſion of any ſingle man, it would not make a very happy being. Though on the contrary, if the miſeries of the whole ſpecies were fixed in a ſingle perſon, they would make a very miſerable one.

The greateſt cauſe of impatience grows not ſo much from the force of calamity, as from the reluctance of the mind of him that ſuffers it: this raiſes the billows within; for though the calamity may be rough, and beyond our power to extricate, yet when it meets with a mind as tumultuous as the calamity, it raiſes a ſtorm, as when the wind and tide are contrary, which may endanger the veſſel. It is the province of reaſon, when the ſenſual part of us grows turbulent, to make excurſions to check its ſallies, and bring it again within the limits it hath tranſgreſſed.

They are extremely deceived, who think there is one poſitive ſtate of life which is always ſerene: content

tent and acquieſcence are not lodged in chance of fortune or circumſtances, but in our own boſoms: our revenues may be large, our barns and coffers crowded, our affairs ſucceſsful, and views advantageous; yet may we be incumbered with diſtaſtes and uneaſineſſes, that will not let us reliſh the moſt delightful fortunes. It is incomparable advice of the philoſopher Epictetus: 'If things are not,' ſays he, 'directly as you would 'have them, be content that they ſhould be as they 'are, and you will live eaſy.' We muſt not let humours or paſſions have the direction of our actions; if we do, we muſt depend on conſtant vexations. Humours are alterable, and paſſions impatient: the former are continually for ſhifting the ſcene; the latter for burſting through it: by ſtruggling with diſquietude, we may give ourſelves trouble and increaſe of pain, not diſengage ourſelves a whit the ſooner. But as raw ſailors, when they grow ſick with the working of the waves, and motion of the ſhip, think they ſhall overcome this ſqueamiſhneſs, if they go into the long-boat; but there being equally out of order, come into the veſſel again, and are therefore never the better, becauſe they carry their nauſeouſneſs along with them; ſo the ſeveral changes of life do only ſhift, and not wholly extirpate the cauſes of our troubles: and theſe are only our want of experience, the weakneſs of our judgment, and a certain impotence of mind, which hinder us from making a right uſe of what we enjoy. The rich man is ſubject to this uneaſineſs of humour, as well as the poor; the batchelor, as well as the man in wedlock: this makes the pleader withdraw from the bar; and then his retirement is altogether as irkſome: whilſt reaſon makes all ſorts of life eaſy, and every change pleaſant. The greateſt cauſe of diſcontent, is, That men have no definite meaſure of their deſires: it is not the ſupply of all their real wants will ſerve their turn; their appetites are precarious, and depend upon contingencies; they hunger not becauſe they are empty, but becauſe others are full. Thus Alexander wept when he heard from Anaxarchus,

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that there was an infinity of worlds; and his friends aſking him if any accident had befallen him, he returned this anſwer: 'Do you not think,' ſaid he, 'a matter worthy of my lamentation, that when there 'is ſuch a vaſt multitude of them, I have not yet con-'quered one?' If we will create imaginary wants to ourſelves, why do we not create an imaginary ſatisfaction to them? We take no notice of the real ſubſtantial bleſſings we enjoy, but go in queſt after ſome fugitive ſatisfaction, which, like a ſhadow, flies ſtill faſter in proportion to our purſuit. A ſtrange folly, thus to court vexations, and be miſerable in chimera!

All a man's wealth or poverty is within himſelf: it is not the outward abundance or want that can make the difference. Let a man be never ſo rich in eſtate, yet if his heart be not ſatisfied, but he is ſtill whining, ſcraping, and pining for more, that man is miſerably poor, and all his bags cannot make him other than a ſtark beggar. On the other hand give me a man of ſmall means, whoſe mind is thoroughly content with a little, and enjoys his pittance with a quiet and thankful heart, that man is exceeding rich: all the world cannot rob him of his wealth.

It is not having, by which we can meaſure riches, but enjoying: the earth hath all treaſures in it, yet no man ſtiles it rich. Of thoſe which the world calls goods of fortune, only opinion ſets the value. Gold and ſilver would be metals, whether we think them ſo, or not; they would not be riches, if mens conceit and inſtitution did not make them ſuch.

Plato compared human life to a game of dice, where we ought to throw for what is moſt commodious to us, but to be content with our caſts, let them be never ſo unfortunate: we cannot make what chances we pleaſe turn up, if we play fair; this lies out of our power: that which is within it, is to accept patiently what fortune ſhall allot us; and ſo to adjuſt things in their proper places, that what is our own, may be diſpoſed of to the beſt advantage; and what hath happened againſt our will, may offend us as little as it is poſſible:

poſſible: otherwiſe, the men who live without meaſures, and with no prudence, are like thoſe whoſe conſtitution is ſo ſickly and infirm, that they are equally impatient both of heats and colds: proſperity exalts them above, and adverſity dejects them beneath, their temper: indeed, each fortune diſturbs them, or rather they raiſe up ſtorms to themſelves in either; and, as they manage it, are querulous and diſſatisfied under good circumſtances.

The moſt trite and common bleſſings which are ſent us, are not to be deſpiſed, but ought to take up a room in our deliberations. We ſhould rejoice, that we live, and are in health, and ſee the ſun; and there are no wars nor ſeditions in our country; that the earth yields to cultivation; and that the ſea is open to our traffic; that we can talk, be ſilent, do buſineſs, and be at leaſure, when we pleaſe. They will afford us greater tranquillity of mind preſent, if we form ſome juſt ideas of them when they are abſent. If we often call to our remembrance, how ſolicitous the ſick man is after health, how acceptable peace is to put out a war, and what a courteſy it will do us, to gain credit, and acquire friends in a city of note, where we are ſtrangers and unknown; and we are much troubled, if we are deprived of any part of this happineſs.

It is a thing highly conducing to the tranquillity of the mind, for a man chiefly to conſider himſelf, and his own affairs: but if this always cannot take place, he ſhould not make compariſons with men of a ſuperior condition to himſelf; though this is the epidemical frenzy of the vulgar. The truth is, we have generally in us the worſer part of the levellers principles; and though we can very contentedly behold multitudes below us, yet we are impatient to ſee any above us; and thus we create torments to ourſelves, by our own repinings, which only ſet us farther from our aims. And what is all this, but ungratefully to accuſe Providence, and be induſtriouſly picking out occaſions to quarrel with it, and torment ourſelves? But he that is in his right ſenſes, and wiſe for his own advantage,

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out of thoſe many millions whom the ſun looks upon, if he ſees any one in the mighty throng, who is more rich or honourable than himſelf, he is neither dejected in his mind nor countenance, nor doth he penſively ſit down deploring his unhappineſs, but he walks abroad publickly, with an honeſt aſſurance. He celebrates his good genius, and boaſts of his good fortune, in that he is happier than a thouſand other men who are in the world.

When we hear others declare that our condition is but miſerable, becauſe we are not magiſtrates, and in eminent command, let us then look upon ourſelves to live, not only in a bare happineſs, but ſplendor, in that we do not beg our bread, are not forced to ſubſiſt by carrying of burdens, or, what is altogether as ſervile, flattery. But ſuch is our folly, that we accuſtom ourſelves rather to live for other mens ſakes than our own; and our diſpoſitions are ſo prone to upbraidings, and to be tainted with envy, that the grief we conceive at another's proſperity, leſſens the joy we ought to take in our own.

It likewiſe greatly prevents our content, and obſtructs the tranquillity of the mind, that our deſires are immoderate, and not ſuited to our abilities of attainment, which, like ſails beyond the proportion of the veſſel, help only to overſet it: ſo that being blown up with extravagant expectations, if ill ſucceſs fruſtrates our attempts, we preſently curſe our ſtars, and accuſe fortune, when we ought rather to lay the blame upon our enterprizing folly. The partial love of ourſelves is chiefly in fault, which infuſeth a vicious inclination to arrogate, and an inſatiable ambition to attempt, every thing. He who impatiently covets what he cannot attain, puts himſelf upon a perpetual rack, keeps his appetites up to the utmoſt ſtretch, and yet hath nothing wherewith to ſatisfy them; for, either we are troubled for the want of ſomething we deſire, or at the ſuffering ſomething we would avoid. Life is ſhort and tireſome; ſpent in wiſhing and deſiring: we adjourn our joy and repoſe to the time to come, often to a pe-

a period, when our beſt bleſſings, youth and health, are already departed. Age comes and ſurprizes us in the midſt of new deſires; we are got no farther, when a fever ſeizes us, and extinguiſhes us: if we recover, it is only to have longer time to wiſh and deſire in.

It has been always the opinion of the wiſe ancients, That happineſs is founded upon wiſdom and virtue; for that we muſt firſt know what we ought to do, and then live according to that knowledge: that a good man can never be miſerable; nor a wicked man happy; nor any man unfortunate that chearfully ſubmits to Providence. Thus, then, the certain way to happineſs lies fair before us: but men will yet ſteer their courſe on the other ſide, which as manifeſtly leads to ruin. We live, as it were, by chance; and by chance, are we governed. Some there are, that torment themſelves afreſh with the memory of what is paſt: others again, afflict themſelves with the apprehenſions of evils to come; and very ridiculouſly both: for the one does not now concern us; and the other not yet.

Levity of mind is a great hindrance of repoſe: from one appetite we paſs to another, not ſo much upon choice, as for change. Some people are never at quiet; others are always ſo; and they are both to blame: for that which looks like vivacity and induſtry in the one, is only a reſtleſſneſs and agitation; and that which paſſes in the other, for moderation and reſerve, is but a drowſy and unactive ſloth. Some are perpetually ſhifting from one thing to another; others again, make their whole life but a kind of uneaſy ſleep. Some lie toſſing and turning, till very wearineſs brings them to reſt: there are many properties and diverſities of vice; but it is one never-failing effect of it to live diſpleaſed. We do all of us labour under inordinate deſires; we are either timorous, and dare not venture; or venturing we do not ſucceed; or elſe we caſt ourſelves upon uncertain hopes, where we are perpetually ſollicitous, and in ſuſpence. We live and die reſtleſs and irreſolute; we grow impatient, and aſhamed of ourſelves; and ſuppreſs our inward vexation,

tion, until it breaks our hearts for want of vent. In ſhort, we divide our lives betwixt a diſlike of the preſent, and a deſire of the future; but he that lives as he ſhould, orders himſelf ſo, as neither to fear, nor to wiſh for to-morrow: if it comes, it is welcome; but if not, there is nothing loſt; for that which is come, is but the ſame over again with what is paſt.

One ſovereign remedy againſt misfortunes and diſcontent, is conſtancy of mind. Nothing can be above him that is above fortune: he is proof againſt calamities; can take as ſound a ſleep in a barn as in a palace, and a bottle of hay makes him as good a lodging as a bed of down: ſhould every thing ſucceed to his wiſh, it would not tranſport him; nor would he think himſelf miſerable, if he ſhould not have one quiet hour in his whole life. But he that ſets up his reſt upon contingencies, ſhall never be quiet. We cannot pronounce a man happy, that depends upon fortune for his happineſs; for nothing can be more prepoſterous, than to place the good of a reaſonable creature in unreaſonable things. What ſhall come to paſs, we know not; but what may come to paſs we know: and, methinks we ſhould not find ſo much fault with fortune for her inconſtancy, when we ourſelves ſuffer a change every moment that we live; only other changes make more noiſe, and this ſteals upon us like the ſhadow upon a dial; every jot as certainly, but more inſenſibly. We ſhould therefore prepare for a ſhipwreck in the port, and for a tempeſt in a calm: we ſhould ſet before our eyes the whole condition of human nature, and conſider as well what may happen, as what commonly does: for the way to make future calamities eaſy to us, is, to make them familiar to us in the contemplation. I would rather make my fortune, than expect it; being neither depreſſed with her injuries, nor dazzled with her favours. When Zeno was told, that all his goods were drowned, 'Why then,' ſays he, 'fortune 'has a mind to make me a philoſopher.' It is a great matter for a man to advance his mind above her threats

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or flatteries; for he that has once gotten the better of her, is ſafe for ever.

Plutarch has remarked, that every man hath a ſtore-houſe of contentment, and trouble in his own boſom; and that the veſſels which contain good and evil, are not placed at Jupiter's threſhold, but in the receſſes of the mind: the variety of our paſſions are an abundant demonſtration. The fool doth not diſcern, and conſequently cannot mind the good that is obvious to him; for his thoughts are ſtill intent upon the future. But the prudent man retrieves things that were loſt out of their oblivion, by ſtrength of recollection, renders them perſpicuous, and enjoys them, as if they were preſent: happineſs having only a few coy minutes to be courted in, the man that hath no intellectuals, neglects this opportunity, and ſo it ſlides away from his ſenſe, and no more belongs to him.

To make a right eſtimate of this world, we ſhould conſider it as a ſtage, and ourſelves but as actors; and to reſolve that it is very little material what part we play, ſo we do it well: and to do it well, is to come off with applauſe from others, and ſatisfaction to ourſelves.

But we purſue meaſures directly contrary: we take the magnifying-glaſſes of diſcontent, when we view our own miſeries, and others felicities; but look upon our own enjoyments, and their ſufferings, through the contracting optics of ingratitude and incompaſſion. It is a very ill-natured thing for any man to think himſelf more miſerable, becauſe another is happy; and yet this is the very thing by which alone many men have made themſelves wretched, creating wants to themſelves, merely from the envious contemplations of other men's abundance.

One principal means to bring us to a ſtate of content and tranquillity, is to determine within ourſelves, that there is no wrangling with fortune; no being out of humour for accidents; whatſoever befals us in our lot, and whether in appearance it be good or bad, it is God's pleaſure, and it is our duty to bear it.

it. When a man has once gotten a habit of virtue, all his actions are equal; he is conſtantly one and the ſame man: the ſum of human duty may be comprehended in few words: patience, where we are to ſuffer; and prudence, in what we are to do.

It is a frequent complaint in the world, that the things we enjoy are but few, tranſitory, and uncertain; ſo ungrateful a conſtruction do we make of the divine bounty. Hence it is, that we are neither willing to die nor contented to live; betwixt the fear of the one, and the deteſtation of the other. Hence it is, that we are perpetually ſhifting of counſels, and ſtill craving of more; becauſe that which we call felicity, is not able to fill us. Thoſe things which all men covet, are but ſpecious out-ſides, and there is nothing in them of ſubſtantial ſatisfaction. Nor is there any thing ſo hard and terrible in the contrary as the vulgar imagine; only the word calamity has an ill reputation in the world, and the very name is more grievous than the thing itſelf. What have I to complain of, if I can turn that to happineſs, which others count a miſery? A wiſe man either repels, or elects, as he ſees the matter before him, without fearing the ill which he rejects, or admiring what he chuſes. Our condition is good enough if we make the beſt on it, and our felicity is in our own power. Things that are adventitious have no effect upon him that ſtudies to make ſure of his happineſs within himſelf. It is not with common accidents of life, as with fire and ſword, that burn and cut all alike; but misfortunes work more or leſs, according to the weakneſs or reſolution of the patient: and he that grieves for the loſs of caſual comforts, ſhall never want occaſion of ſorrow.

Reſtleſſneſs of mind, inequality of humour, inconſtancy of affection, and uncertainty of conduct, are all vices of the ſoul, but different; and as like as they appear, are not always found in one and the ſame ſubject. Every thing is ſtrange in the humours, morals, and manners of men: one lives four, paſſionate,

nate, covetous, furious, ſubmiſſive, laborious, and full of his own intereſts, who was born gay, peaceable, indolent, magnificent, of a noble courage, and far from any thing baſe and pitiful: the cares of life, the circumſtances they find themſelves in, and the law of neceſſity, force nature, and cauſe ſuch great changes. Thus ſuch a man, at the bottom, and in himſelf, is not to be defined; abundance of things which are out of his power, change, turn, and over-turn him: he is not really what he is, or what he appears to be. 'Tis ſo common for man not to be happy, and ſo eſſential to all good to be acquired with trouble, that what comes with eaſe is ſuſpected: we can hardly comprehend how any thing, which coſts us ſo little, can be for our advantage, or how, by juſt meaſures, we could reach the ends we propoſed: we think we deſerve good fortunes, but ought ſeldom to depend on it. There are certain good things which we moſt paſſionately deſire, and the very idea of them moves and tranſports us; yet if we happen to obtain them, we are leſs ſenſible of them than we thought we ſhould be; and leſs buſy in rejoicing over them, than in aſpiring after greater. So there are ſome evils ſo frightful, and ſome misfortunes ſo horrible, that we dare not think on them, and the very proſpect makes us tremble: if they chance to fall on us, we find more relief than we could imagine; we arm ourſelves againſt perverſe fortune, and do better than we hoped for.

Is it not plain, that we ſet falſe eſtimates on every thing that may befal us, foreſtal objects with prepoſſeſſions or prejudices, and thereby become inſtrumental to our own uneaſineſs? Indeed, if we could uſe our eyes aright, and ſee things in their true ſhapes, a competency would be more pleaſing than abundance; and the envied pomp of princes, when balanced with the cares and hazards annexed, would rather make a wiſe man fear, than deſire preferment. There is no greater unhappineſs than the fond admiration of other mens enjoyments, and contempt of our

our own: but if we would begin at the right end, and look with as much compaſſion on the adverſities of others, as we do with envy at their proſperities, every man would find cauſe to ſit down contentedly with his own burden.

But the nature of man is extremely querulous: we know not what we would have; and when we have it, we know not how to like it; we would be happy, yet we would not die: we would live long, yet we would not be old: we abound with complaints, yet nothing diſlikes us but the preſent; for what we condemn while it was, once paſt we magnify, and ſtrive to recal it out of the jaws of time. Every bleſſing that is lent us through our ingratitudes and diſcontents, hath ſomething to diſparage and diſtaſte it. Children bring cares; ſingle life is wild and ſolitary: religion nicely ſevere; liberty lawleſs; wealth burdenſome; and mediocrity contemptible: every thing has its fault, either in abundance or deficiency.

The diſcontented man is ever head-ſtrong and ſelf-willed, yet does not tie himſelf to eſteem, or pronounce according to reaſon; ſome things he muſt diſlike, he knows not wherefore, but he likes them not: every thing he meddleth with, he either findeth imperfect, or maketh ſo: if but an unſeaſonable ſhower croſs his recreation, he is ready to fall out with heaven, and thinks he is wronged, if God will not take his times when to rain, and when to ſhine: he is a ſlave to envy; and loſeth fleſh with fretting, not ſo much at his own infelicity, as at others good: neither hath he leiſure to joy in his own bleſſings, whilſt another proſpereth: fain would he ſee ſome mutinies; but dares not raiſe them: nothing but fear keeps him from conſpiracies; and no man is more cruel, when he is not manacled with danger: the inconſtant and he, agree well in their felicity, which both place in change: but herein they differ; the inconſtant man affects that which will be; the diſcontented, commonly that which was.

Diſ-

Diſcontentment is a mixture of anger, and of griefs; both which are wont to raiſe up fearful tempeſts in the ſoul. What can be more fooliſh, than for a man, becauſe he thinks God hath made him miſerable by croſſes, to make himſelf more miſerable by his own diſtempers? If a man will ſpurn againſt ſtrong iron ſpikes, what can he hope to carry away but wounds? How witleſs a thing it is, for a man to torment himſelf with the thoughts of thoſe evils that are paſt all remedy? What wiſe beholder would not have ſmiled with pity and ſcorn, to have ſeen the great Auguſtus, after the defeat of ſome choice troops, knock his head againſt the wall, and hear him paſſionately cry out, *O Varus*, reſtore me my legions! Yet thus froward and tetchy is nature in the beſt, if we may not have all we would have, all that we have is nothing: if we be not perfectly humoured we are wilfully unthankful.

'Tis certain, our repinings proceed not from any defect of the heavenly bounty, but from the malignant temper within us: it might be one great furtherance to our content, if we would but conſider how little will ſuffice nature, and that all the reſt is but matter of opinion. Indeed, what uſe is there of more than what may nouriſh us within, and cover us without? And yet do we rove over all the latitude of nature for contentment; our appetites are truly unreaſonable, and will know no bounds: we begin with neceſſaries, as Pliny juſtly obſerves; and from thence we riſe to exceſs, puniſhing ourſelves with our own wild deſires: whereas, if we were wiſe, we might find mediocrity an eaſe. God hath placed none of us in ſo barren a ſoil, in ſo forlorn a ſtate, but there is ſomething perhaps in it which may afford us comfort: but if in a ſullen humour, we will not cultivate our field, becauſe we have, perhaps, more mind to our neighbour's, we may thank ourſelves if we ſtarve; the deſpiſing of what God has given us, is but a cold invitation to farther bounty: this complaining humour is a ſickneſs of the

mind, and a perpetual craving of the appetite, without any poſſibility of ſatisfaction.

The moſt effectual motives to the obtaining a due tranquillity of mind, and reſignation of ſpirit, in every change of life, is to reflect, that if there be any happineſs to be found upon earth, it is that which we call content: though this is a flower that grows not in every garden. To become maſters of this great bleſſing, we muſt confine our deſires to a proper compaſs, put our appetites under a reſtraint, and our paſſions under ſubjection: not be continually graſping at poſſeſſions out of our reach, founding our bliſs on imaginary attainments, or repining at the ſtation in which heaven has placed us, and thinking any other would conduce more to our felicity.

The tranſitorineſs of all earthly enjoyments, the unſatisfying condition of them, and the danger of over-eſteeming them, ſhould wean us from ſourneſs or diſcontent at being deprived of them. The conſiderations, that divine Providence over-rules all events, that a little will ſuffice the neceſſities of nature, will convince us, that we ought to abate our deſires, to digeſt ſmall and ſeeming inconveniencies, and to think that our preſent condition is beſt for us. By this means we ſhall neither repine at our neighbour's happineſs, nor conceive ourſelves unfortunate; be never anxious for the future, nor uneaſy at the preſent; but enjoy a temper and ſerenity of ſoul, and put it out of the power of fate or fortune to harraſs or diſcompoſe us.

RETIRE-

RETIREMENT.

RETIREMENT is a ſort of ſleep to a wearied nature; when we have run through the tumults and fatigues of life, when we are harraſſed out with buſineſs and hurry, we are glad to take ſhelter in a calm privacy, and put in, as to a ſafe harbour, out of the troubled ocean.

Cicero is not for allowing any the benefits of retirement, who can be ſerviceable in a ſtate of activity, and only permits them an exemption from employment, when they are diſabled from buſineſs by want of health, or called off by ſome more important reaſon. *Quibus autem talis nulla ſit cauſa, ſi deſpicere ſe dicunt ea, quæ plerique admirantur, imperia & magiſtratus; iis non modò non laudi, verùm etiam vitio dandum puto.* 'But thoſe who have no ſuch pleas to 'excuſe them, if they yet profeſs to deſpiſe what the 'generality of the world are fond of, command and 'office, I think they are not only not to be com-'mended, but cenſured for withdrawing.'

Seneca, who ſpent the greateſt part of his life in a court, ſeems to be of a contrary opinion: he tells his ſon, 'There is no opportunity ſcapes me of en-'quiring where you are, what you do, and what 'company you keep: and I am well enough pleaſed, 'that I can hear nothing concerning you, for it ſhews 'that you live retired.' A general converſation is

neither eaſy, nor abſolutely ſafe; and yet our retreats may look like oſtentation.

'Tis a fair ſtep towards happineſs and virtue, to delight in the converſation of good, and of wiſe men; and where that cannot be had, the next point, is, to keep no company at all. Solitude affords buſineſs enough, and the entertainment is comfortable and eaſy. To live hidden, was never but ſafe and pleaſant; but then, ſo much better, when the world is worſe. It is a happineſs, not to be a witneſs of the miſchief of the time, which it is hard to ſee, and be guiltleſs. Your philoſophical cell is a ſafe ſhelter from tumults, from vices, from diſcontentments.

Beſides that lively honeſt and manly pleaſure which ariſes from the gain of knowledge in the deep myſteries of nature, how eaſy is it in retirement to live free from the common cares, from the infection of common evils! Who is envied, and who pitied at court, who buys hopes and kindneſs deareſt, who lays ſecret mines to blow up another, that himſelf may ſucceed, can never trouble you. Theſe cares dare not enter into a ſanctuary of peace: thence you can ſee now all that live public are toſſed in theſe waves, and pity them; you ſit as on a high rock above the waters, and laugh at the tempeſt that cannot reach you. This view of retirement brings to my mind a paſſage of Lucretius, beautifully tranſlated by Mr. Dryden; which bears no ſmall reſemblance to what I have advanced.

'Tis pleaſant ſafely to behold from ſhore
The rowling ſhip; and hear the tempeſt roar:
Not that another's pain is our delight,
But pains unfelt, produce the pleaſing ſight.
'Tis pleaſant alſo to behold from far
The moving legions mingled in the war.
But much more ſweet, thy labouring ſteps to guide
To virtue's heights, with wiſdom well ſupply'd,
And all the magazines of learning fortify'd.

From

From thence to look below on human kind,
Bewilder'd in the maze of life and blind.
O wretched man! in what a miſt of life,
Incloſed with dangers, and with noiſy ſtrife,
He ſpends his little ſpan; and over-feeds
His cramm'd deſires with more than nature needs.
For nature wiſely ſtints our appetite,
And craves no more than undiſturb'd delight;
Which minds, unmix'd with cares and fears, obtain,
A ſoul ſerene, a body void of pain.

But however amiable the bleſſing of retirement may look, and be conſidered by ſome, I am not inſenſible there are others who will object, that though ſolitude promiſes fair, and is a ſtrong entertainment to a melancholy fancy, yet were the notion driven up, and tried in its fartheſt extent, we ſhould quickly change our opinion. They ſay, that like a great many other things, it is better in proſpect, than poſſeſſion: like a ſummer's cloud in the evening, it looks ſoft and fine at a diſtance, and preſents us with a great many pretty figures; but when you come cloſe to the object, the colours are rubbed out, and the ſubſtance ſhrinks: there is nothing remaining but empty air; nothing that will either feed the eye, or fill the graſp.

It may be further urged, that Adam was created in the perfection of his ſpecies; that there was nothing but plenty and pleaſure, innocence and ſecurity in view; he had neither want to diſtreſs him, danger to alarm him, or guilt to make him uneaſy: but notwithſtanding this paradiſe, both without and within, God ſaw his being imperfect, and that 'twas not good for him to be alone. If happineſs then is impracticable without ſociety, if ſolitude, ſtrictly taken, won't do in paradiſe, 'tis in vain to expect it elſewhere.

If a perſon, ſays Tully, of ſenſe and probity, was furniſhed with all the bleſſings of life, and had never ſo much wealth, leiſure, and largeneſs of underſtand-

derſtanding, yet if he was barred all manner of company, and never allowed ſo much as to ſee a man, he had better throw up his being, and fairly take leave of the world. Indeed, a man well accommodated, may love company from a more generous motive, than that of pride or vanity; to transfuſe his ſatisfaction, and ſhew his good nature; to inſtruct, to oblige, and entertain.

There may be this objection, indeed, made to retirement, that ſolitude gives too much leiſure for reflection, opens an unacceptable ſcene, and ſhews a man the poverty of his own nature: for let the outſide look never ſo fair, 'twill by no means bear the teſt of a thorough inſpection; the ſtores, when examined, will fall ſtrangely ſhort: the moſt knowing and powerful will ſoon be at a ſtand: they will quickly perceive their underſtanding puzzled, and their will checked, in abundance of things. Beſides, the uncertainty of the future, and the thoughts of death will crowd in; in ſhort, nothing but the ſupports of religion can make a man fit to entertain himſelf. Now, company gives buſineſs and diverſion, draws the mind abroad, and keeps people's thoughts from preying upon themſelves.

It often happens, that if we cannot be courted, and have our will, we fall into a fit of retirement, and make company no longer. How often do the declenſions of intereſt, the misfortunes in love, or ambition, drive people out of buſineſs and ſight, and make them withdraw to privacy? As children, when they are croſſed in their fancy, walk off, and ſtand ſullen in a corner. Some people likewiſe retire, to conceal their defects: they are ſufficiently acquainted with the lean temper of the generality: how forward the world is to ſpy out a fault, and publiſh a diſadvantage; and therefore, they are unwilling to have the imperfections of age, or fortune gazed at and remarked: too much light diſcovers the wrinkles; which makes them chuſe to ſit out of the ſun.

Plutarch

Plutarch hath writ a ſhort treatiſe on this queſtion, 'Whether it was rightly ſaid, live concealed.' The philoſopher ſeems poſitive, that he who ſaid it, had no mind to live concealed, but ſpoke it with deſign of being taken notice of for his very ſaying it: as if he ſaw deeper into things than every vulgar eye, and to purchaſe to himſelf a reputation, how unjuſtly ſoever, by inveigling others into obſcurity and retirement: that beſides, the thing itſelf ſounded ill, to bid us keep all our life-time out of the world's eye, as if we had rifled the ſepulchres of the dead; or done ſuch deteſtable villainies, as we muſt hide for: as if it were grown a crime to live, unleſs we could keep all others from knowing we do ſo. From this poſition, he proceeds to pronounce, that even an ill-liver ought not to withdraw from the converſe of others; no, let him be known, let him be reclaimed, let him repent: if he have any ſtock of virtue, let it not lie unemployed; or if he have been viciouſly bent, let him not by flying the means continue unreclaimed and uncured. All the infirmities of a diſſolute life, all the irregular paſſions of the ſoul, ought to be laid open to the view of all, and undergo the touch of every ſkilful hand, that all who examine into the temper, may be able to preſcribe accordingly. Doth anger tranſport us? Let us take the advice to ſhun the occaſions of it. Doth love torment, or jealouſy diſtract us? From converſation, we ſhall be taught expedients to remove or weather our paſſions.

Again, if, on the other hand, this advice be calculated for the owners of worth and virtue; if they muſt be condemned to privacy, and live unknown to the world; what would this have amounted to, but in effect, to bid Epaminondas lay down his arms; to bid Lycurgus cancel his laws; to bid Thraſibylus ſpare the tyrants; in a word, to bid Pythagoras forbear his inſtructions; and Socrates, his reaſonings and diſcourſes? What would it be, but to ſentence virtue to be doomed to oblivion, art to idleneſs and in-

activity, philoſophy to ſilence, and all a man's happineſs to be forgotten? If in the ſtate of life we are under, we muſt be ſecluded from all knowledge and acquaintance with the world, let it be only ſuch who make it the whole buſineſs of life to heap pleaſure upon pleaſure: let ſuch live recluſes all their days: but what ſhould they hide their heads for, who, with regard to the works of nature, own and magnify a divine Being, who celebrate his juſtice and providence, who in point of morality are due obſervers of the law, promoters of ſociety and community among men, lovers of the commonwealth, and in the adminiſtration thereof, prefer the common good before a private advantage? What ſhould ſuch men cloiſter up themſelves, and live recluſes from the world for? Would you have them out of the way, for fear they ſhould teach others to be good too? For fear they ſhould ſet a good example, and allure others to virtue out of emulation of the precedent? For to be known to the world under ſome eminent character, not only carries a reputation with it, but makes the virtues in us become practical like light; which renders us not only viſible, but uſeful to others.

It may be ſtill argued in diſcountenance of ſolitude and retirement, that men's natural parts lying unemployed for lack of acquaintance with the world, contract a kind of filth or ruſt and crazineſs thereby: for ſottiſh eaſe, and a life wholly ſedentary, and given up to idleneſs, ſpoils and debilitates, not only the body, but the ſoul too: and as cloſe waters ſhadowed over by bordering trees, and ſtagnated in default of ſprings to ſupply current and motion to them, become foul and corrupt; ſo the innate faculties and powers of a dull unſtirring ſoul, whatever uſefulneſs, whatever ſeeds of good ſhe may have taken in her, yet when ſhe puts not thoſe powers into action, when once they ſtagnate, they looſe their vigour, and run to decay. A man's reaſon (like fire, ſcarce viſible, and juſt going out) retires

tires into itſelf; and what with inactivity and dulneſs, every little fleeting object ſo ſhatters and endangers the extinguiſhing it, that there remain but ſome obſcure and glimmering indications that the man is alive. Therefore he that caſts himſelf into obſcure retirements, he that ſits ſurrounded in darkneſs, and buries himſelf alive, ſeems, in Plutarch's mind, to repine at his own birth, and grudges he ever had a being.

All this, I muſt own, makes againſt a ſtate of retirement; to which there may be other conſiderations ſubjoined, which, as Mr. Collier has termed it, ſhould keep us from diſincorporating ourſelves. We had our being from mankind; our ſupport, our education, the growth of our bodies, and the progreſs of our reaſon, came all, under God, through their hands. All the pleaſure and conveniencies of life are conveyed to us by this channel: and, therefore, if ſolitude could provide us neceſſaries, and furniſh us to our wiſhes, which is impoſſible, yet we ought not to diſband, and break looſe from human ſociety: we ſhould rather continue upon the ſpot, and diſcharge the obligation. For ſhould every body be overgrown with this ſhyneſs and chagrin, ſhould they run off ſingle, and not endure the ſight of each other, not only ſtates and kingdoms, arts and ſciences, laws and religion, but even human nature itſelf would ſink and be deſtroyed.

But, farther, what if general kindneſs, and chriſtian charity, ſo ſtrongly enjoined in the ſcripture, be utterly inconſiſtent with an abſolute retirement? For which way can any virtue be exerciſed without object or opportunity? All inſtances of affection and ſympathy, and all works of mercy, are impracticable upon this ſcheme. How can he that abſconds from the whole world, and lives literally by himſelf, either feed the hungry or clothe the naked? How can ſuch a one be hoſpitable to ſtrangers, or viſit thoſe under ſickneſs or confinement? What poſſibility is there of his inſtructing the ignorant, of com-

ſorting the afflicted, or correcting the audacious libertine? Is it not to renounce human ſociety; is it not to renounce chriſtianity, and cut our ſelves off from the communion of the church: of the church, which implies company, and is enough to diſcourage ſolitude, by the very idea and name of it?

But after all theſe heinous charges are weighed, and aggravated with additional circumſtances and argument, a calm retirement may not only be excuſable, but often a part of our duty. I would not by retirement be thought to imitate a wild and ſavage withdrawing from all commerce of human kind, or to preſcribe the ſolitude of a deſart: this would be inverting the bleſſings and benefits of ſuch a ſtate; this would be to derive it from a ſickneſs of the mind, prevailing melancholy, and ſplenetic reſolutions; I would not be underſtood to recommend it farther, than a ſeaſonable retiring from tumult and diſtraction; from vice and impertinence; from vanity, and fatigue. It is not impoſſible to live at eaſe, to live to heaven and ourſelves, and yet be ſerviceable to our fellow-creatures? Muſt we, like gally-ſlaves, be for ever labouring at the oar of buſineſs, ſtruggling with frauds, and buſtling with inquietudes; and there is no portion of our days allowed us to reſt and tranquillity; no reprieve from toil and uneaſineſs? Muſt our healths and conſtitutions, our comforts and ſatisfactions, be given up and ſacrificed to eternal anxieties? May we never be allowed to plead the privilege of our labours, ſue out our diſmiſſion, and withdraw from fatigue?

It is certain all mankind love eaſe; though ambition and avarice employ moſt men's thoughts; they are ſuch uneaſy habits, that we do not indulge them out of choice, but from ſome neceſſity, real or imaginary. We ſeek happineſs, in which eaſe is the principal ingredient; and the end propoſed in our moſt reſtleſs purſuits, is tranquillity. We are therefore ſoothed and delighted with the repreſentation of it, and fancy we partake of the pleaſure. Are not

health,

health, tranquillity, and pleaſing objects, the growth of the country? And though men, for the general good of the world, are made to love populous cities, the country hath the greateſt ſhare in an uncorrupted heart. When we paint, deſcribe, or any way indulge our fancy, the country is the ſcene which ſupplies us with the moſt lovely images. This ſtate was that wherein God placed Adam when in paradiſe; nor could all the fanciful wits of antiquity imagine any thing that could adminiſter more exquiſite delight in their elyſium.

The fruit we gather from our many days of company is very little: we ſcatter much in converſation, we gather but ſmall profit; but for the few hours we ſpend in retirement and recollection, the return is very conſiderable; and the greater portions of our time we lay out for ourſelves hereafter.

A gentleman in a country life enjoys paradiſe with a temper fit for it; who underſtands the ſtation in which heaven and nature have placed him; he is more ſuperior to thoſe of lower fortune by his benevolence, than his poſſeſſions; and juſtly divides his time between ſolitude and company, ſo as to uſe the one for the other. His life is ſpent in good offices to his neighbours, and his counſel and knowledge are a guard to the ſimplicity and innocence of thoſe of lower talents, and the entertainment and happineſs of thoſe of equal.

To a thinking man, it muſt ſeem prodigious, that the very ſituation in a country life does not incline men to a ſcorn of the mean gratifications ſome take in it. To ſtand in a ſtream naturally lulls the mind into compoſure and reverence; to walk in ſhades, diverſifies that pleaſure; and a bright ſun-ſhine makes a man conſider all nature in gladneſs, and himſelf the happieſt being in it, as he is the moſt conſcious of her gifts and enjoyments. It would be the moſt impertinent piece of pedantry imaginable, to form our pleaſures by imitation of others; I will not therefore mention Scipio and Lælius, who are generally

produced on this ſubject as authorities for the charms of a rural life.

He that does not feel the force of agreeable views and ſituations in his own mind, will hardly arrive at the ſatisfactions they bring from the reflections of others. However, they who have a taſte that way, are more particularly enflamed with deſire, when they ſee others in the enjoyment of it; eſpecially when men carry into the country a knowledge of the world, as well as of nature. The leiſure of ſuch perſons is endeared and refined by reflection upon cares and inquietudes. The abſence of paſt labours doubles preſent pleaſures, which are ſtill augmented, if the perſon in ſolitude has the happineſs of being addicted to letters.

To retire for quiet, and the benefit of thinking, is certainly commendable; *Amici fures temporis*, ſaid the lord Bacon. Converſation is a thief that ſteals away a great part of our time, and uſually ſtuffs our memory with rubbiſh; ſolitude is a great relief in ſuch caſes; and wiſe men are glad to get clear of the croud, for freſh air and breathing. In retirement we taſte the ſweets of a quiet repoſe, and entertain ourſelves with freedom; nay, we live more in two days of retreat, and are more ſenſible of what life is, than in two years full of buſineſs and trouble; and we ſee greater things in retirements, than abroad in the world.

What do we ſee great in the world, unleſs it be perhaps an army, the ſiege of a town, or the court of a prince? Theſe are things we are quickly accuſtomed to, and which only appear great to us at the firſt ſight. But in retirement, we look upon the different works of nature; the ſun-riſing and ſetting; a ſtill night; and thoſe planets which ſo majeſtically rowl over our heads, which we continually admire.

It muſt be, in reality, a great miſery for a man never to be his own: too much acquaintance makes us ſtrangers to ourſelves; and the more we converſe with men, the leſs we converſe with our own boſoms.

There

There are indeed degrees of ſolitude, and we may be miſtaken if we think it a ſanctuary againſt all vices, or that there are not ſuch, who embrace it merely for a larger ſcope in criminal enjoyments. They withdraw, as Tiberius did to Capreæ, to be more at leiſure for their vices, to debauch without interruption, and be ſomewhat covered from cenſure and obſervation.

Some people's melancholy has driven them to an exceſs; they are loſt in a miſt of the ſpleen; they think all ſociety infectious; and, that every mortal has the tokens upon him, and ſo retire to 'ſcape being polluted. This indeed is a wrong method; for at ſuch a time, a man ſhould awaken himſelf, and immediately ſtrike off into buſineſs, or innocent diverſion. Reſolution and ſpirit will quickly repel the malignity, and diſcuſs the humour. For to loſe the comforts of life in a few vapours, and to be ſmoked and ſmothered out of one's reaſon, are far from circumſtances of credit. 'Tis not good to run the length of a retired fancy, nor ſuffer the ſpleen to govern. Solitude muſt have a temper as well as other things. To over-drive nature, and puſh the experiment too far, never turns to any account.

People that retire, ſays Mr. Collier, ſhould examine the difficulties, and proportion the undertaking to their ſtrength; a thorough ſcrutiny of the inclinations, of the will and the power, is no more than a neceſſary precaution. Without this preliminary prudence a man may over-burthen his ſhoulders, and wade out of his depth: neither can the way be made back ſometimes without levity and imputation. To live alone, though in a moderate degree, will require ſome tolerable proviſion in books and capacity: he that goes off unfurniſhed in the underſtanding, will make wretched company for himſelf. He has only contrived a ſettlement for a ſavage life, and retires like a beaſt to his den. A man may as well fail alone as in company; there are ways for it, until ſuch time as he hath framed himſelf to be *ſibi thea-*

theatrum; ſo much to reſpect his reaſon, and fear his conſcience, that he cannot without ſhame ſtumble or trip in their preſence, that he dare not halt before himſelf, but bears a kind of reverence and reſpect unto himſelf, which, next to religion, is the chiefeſt bridle againſt all vice.

We cannot have a nobler motive to retirement, than upon the ſcore of religion: to ſhut up the proſpect of this world, that we may take the better view of the other, is a prudent precaution. 'Tis certainly good to retreat from company, and bar the door upon buſineſs and diverſion; and when we are thus diſengaged, to inſpect our practice, to ſtate our accounts, and examine our condition for eternity. 'Tis good to make a ſtand by ourſelves, and conſider how well we are reconciled to a ſtate of ſeparation. Things ſtanding thus, we ſhould endeavour to diſentangle before-hand, to untwiſt our affection, and ſlide off from the world by degrees; and ſince the objects of ſenſe will ſhortly fail us, let us leſſen the correſpondence, and try a little to live without them: let us apply to a more laſting fund, and ſubſiſt our happineſs upon thought. To retire for ſuch purpoſes as theſe, is the beſt improvement of ſolitude: to be thus alone, is the way to bring us to the moſt deſirable company. Thoſe who have attained to that ſublimity of mind, as to be above all worldly cares, though they meddle with the world, as being of the world, yet they do it ſo ſafely, that they cleave not to it, nor are aſtoniſhed to leave it.

To come to a concluſion: ſolitude hath certainly more pleaſures in it, than any public employment; for it drives us into contemplation, which is ſo charming, that it may rather be ſaid to raviſh, than pleaſe, committing ſo open a rapture upon our ſouls, that it puts them almoſt into a ſtate of ſeparation. It is an abuſe of retirement, for men to embrace it out of meanneſs of ſpirit, or for weakneſs of parts, as not fit to attain greatneſs; and they ought to make it their choice, purely to arrive at that happineſs

pineſs which is uſually enjoyed in a retired virtuous life. Sir Richard Bulſtrode, in his eſſays, tells us of a king of Bohemia, who (retiring into a deſart, where he lived ſeveral years with three poor hermits) at his death, told them, 'There was no greatneſs preferable to the tranquillity of that ſolitude 'he had enjoyed with them; which he eſteemed as 'true happineſs: whereas that life he had led upon 'his throne, deſerved more the title of death than 'life.'

I remember it was the ſaying of a wiſe man, *Crede mihi, qui benè latuit, benè vixit*; 'Believe 'me, he that hath lain well concealed, hath lived 'well.' But I muſt ſay in our retirement, if we only converſe with earth, we ſhall be like it, that is, unlike ourſelves: but if we are engaged in more refined and intellectual entertainments, we ſhall be ſomething more than ourſelves, that is, than this narrow circumference of earth ſpeaks us, the ſoul being always like the object of its delight and converſe.

In ſhort, I would not be underſtood to recommend retirement that ſhould make us ſupine, unactive, and uſeleſs: every ſtation of life has its offices; and there can be no *vacuum* in our breathing hours, but when, by ſlumber, we repair our nature. In our retreats from the hurry of public employments, we muſt make ourſelves ſerviceable as far as we can: there are duties which ſolitude cannot exempt us from: we muſt extend our hands to do good when occaſion offers, and not abſolutely wrap ourſelves up in contemplation. The communication of our kindneſs from behind a cloud, when 'tis voluntary, and drawn down neither by force nor expectation, implies a generoſity, that ſeems a diſtant imitation of the divinity.

AGE.

AGE.

OF all the impertinent wiſhes which we have expreſſed in converſation, there is not one more unworthy a gentleman, or a man of liberal education, than that of wiſhing one's ſelf younger. I have obſerved, this wiſh is uſually made upon ſight of ſome object which gives the idea of a paſt action, which it is no diſhonour to us that we cannot now repeat; or elſe on what was in itſelf ſhameful when we performed it. It is a certain ſign of a fooliſh or diſſolute mind, if we want our youth again, only for the ſtrength of bones and ſinews, which we once were maſters of. When an old man bewails the loſs of ſuch gratifications which are paſſed, he diſcovers a monſtrous inclination to that which is not in the courſe of Providence to recal. The ſtate of an old man, who is diſſatisfied merely for his being ſuch, is the moſt out of all meaſure of reaſon and good ſenſe of any being we have an account of, from the higheſt angel to the loweſt worm.

Old age is that which we all deſire to aſpire unto; and when we have attained, are as ready to complain of as our greateſt miſery, verifying in part that old obſervation, That wedlock and age are things which we deſire and repent of.

Da ſpatium vitæ, multos da, Jupiter, annos;
Hoc recto vultu, ſolum hoc & pallidus optas.
Sed quàm continuis, & quantis longa Senectus,
Plena Malis?

ſays Juvenal:

Jove,

Jove, grant me length of life; and years good ſtore
Heap on my bending back; I aſk no more:
Both ſick and healthful, old and young conſpire,
In this one ſilly miſchievous deſire.
Miſtaken bleſſing, which old age they call!
'Tis a long naſty darkſome hoſpital!

Years alone, are load enough for the ſtrength, much more for the weakneſs of age; but when labour and ſorrow are added to the weight, how can we but double under the burden? He was both old and wiſe, who ſaid, out of experience, That the laſt days are the dregs of our life; the clearer part is good, and all drawn out; the lees ſink down to the bottom. Who can expreſs the miſerable inconveniences that attend old age, wherein our cares muſt needs be multiplied according to the manifold occaſions of our affairs: for the world is a net, in which the more we ſtir, the more we are entangled. And for our bodily grievances, what varieties do we here meet withal? What aches of the bones, what convulſions of ſinews, what torments of the bowels, what diſtillations of rheum; what weakneſſes of retention and digeſtion, what failings of the memory, and decays of the ſenſes? Are not theſe they which the Preacher calls the evil days, and the years wherein a man ſhall ſay, 'I have 'no pleaſure,' wherein, 'the ſun, or the light, or the 'moon, or the ſtars, are darkened, or the clouds re-'turn after the rain: when the keepers of the houſe 'ſhall tremble, and the ſtrong men ſhall bow them-'ſelves; and the grinders ceaſe, becauſe they are few; 'and thoſe that look out of the windows be darkened?' In ſhort, age is no other than the common ſewer, into which all diſeaſes of our life are wont to empty themſelves: it is but the winter of our life; how can we then expect any other than gloomy weather, chilling froſts, ſtorms, and tempeſts.

It gives no ſmall trouble to mankind, to conſider that the greateſt part of life is no better than a ſlow con-

conſumption; that we muſt ſhortly ſink into a ſtate of weakneſs and inſignificancy, and grow unacceptable both to others and ourſelves: when our limbs, and our memory, and, it may be, our underſtanding too, will fail us; when nothing but a fever will warm our blood; and all the lively perceptions are forced out of pain: that life, like an ill-gotten eſtate, conſumes inſenſibly, in deſpight of all imaginable frugality. Infancy is a ſtate of hope, and has the tenderneſs of parents, or the compaſſion of ſtrangers, to ſupport it. Youth, like a bloſſom, gives us beauty in hand, and fruit in proſpect: but age grows worſe and worſe upon the progreſs, ſinks deeper in ſorrow and neglect, and has no relief to expect but the grave.

But whilſt we do thus complainingly aggravate the incommodities of age, we muſt beware leſt we derogate from the bounty of our Maker, and diſparage thoſe bleſſings which he accounts precious; amongſt which, old age is none of the meaneſt. It is not a little injurious, ſo to faſten our eyes upon the diſcommodities of any condition, as not to take in the advantages that belong to it; which carefully laid together, may perhaps ſway the balance to an equal poize. The fond humour of appearing in the gay and faſhionable world, and being applauded for trivial excellencies, is, what makes youth have age in contempt; and makes age reſign with ſo ill a grace the qualifications of youth.

To ſtate the matter fairly, I ſhall beg leave to take a ſhort ſurvey of the inconveniencies to which age ſubjects us, and then ſubjoin the certain advantages we are indebted to for it. As to the decays of body and conſtitution, I have already ſpoken; and ſhall confine myſelf to thoſe imperfections which are of a moral kind.

To begin then: old perſons are generally guilty of a frowardneſs, to be diſpleaſed upon little occaſions, to take things by the wrong handle, and to put ſevere conſtructions upon words and actions: this unhappy temper may be aſſigned to ſeveral cauſes: they may be

be over-ſuſpicious of being condemned; long experience hath taught them, that the world is generally unbenevolent and narrow-ſpirited; that ſelf-love and ill-nature are extremely common; and that the pleaſures of too many are drawn from the misfortunes of their neighbours. Theſe remarks confirmed by repeated inſtances, make no kind impreſſion. So that when a man is conſcious of his own decay, when he grows leſs active and agreeable, he is apt to fancy younger people are more ready to divert themſelves with his declenſion, than to pity it. This apprehenſion makes him interpret with rigour, conclude himſelf injured upon a remote appearance, and grow diſguſted upon every ambiguity.

Mankind, indeed, ought not to be capable of ſuch barbarity, as this jealouſy ſuppoſes: it is miſapplying their paſſions at a ſcandalous rate; inſulting an unavoidable infirmity, and trampling upon the venerable ruins of human nature: this inſolence is fooliſh, as well as unnatural: he that acts in this manner, does but expoſe his own future condition, and laugh at himſelf beforehand.

A forwardneſs to be diſobliged may proceed from the infirmities of age: the laſt part of life is a perpetual indiſpoſition; you are ſeldom free from the pain or the weakneſs of a diſeaſe: the fever of the fit may ſometimes intermit; but then your beſt days are ſhort of health. Such uneaſy diſcipline is apt to make the ſpirits turn eager; when a man is loaden, a feather is felt, and the leaſt rub will make him complain.

It is another inconvenience of age, that old perſons are frequently apt to over-rate their own ſufficiency: they fancy their underſtandings move upon an aſcent; and that they muſt grow wiſer of courſe, as they grow older. Thus they often take their improvement upon content, without examining how they came by it; as if the mere motion of the ſun, or the running of an hour-glaſs, would do the buſineſs. Now, a miſtake in this caſe, makes them impatient of contradiction, and imagine themſelves always in the right.

To argue the point, and debate their opinions, is to injure them. Younger men ought to believe hard, and take authority for the laſt proof.

Then, reſting too much upon the privilege of their years, may be the occaſion of another imperfection; and in compliance with the innocent demands and ſatisfaction of thoſe who are younger. Their opinions are the ſtandard of truth, and their deſires the meaſure of agreeableneſs. This partiality of thought, this indulging their own inclinations, makes them firm to prepoſſeſſion, and with difficulty removed from thoſe cuſtoms which firſt engaged them. The bare novelty of a thing is enough to caſt it; they condemn the prudent alterations of the preſent age, and are too kind to the errors of the former.

There is another general misfortune incident to old age, and that is covetouſneſs. This looks like ſo great a paradox, that nothing but matter of fact could force us to believe it: we have leſs time to ſtay in the world, and leſs capacity to enjoy it; therefore we muſt love it better than ever: what ſort of reaſoning is this? To what purpoſe ſhould a man graſp ſo hard when he can take the leaſt hold? The caſe is this: age is not vigorous enough for buſineſs and fatiguing: it is no time to work up an eſtate in, or to repair a miſadventure: and where labour is impracticable, and recovery deſpaired of, parſimony has the better colour. Old perſons are apt to dread a misfortune more than others: they have obſerved how prodigality is puniſhed, and poverty neglected: they are ſenſible their ſtrength decays, and their infirmities increaſe, and therefore conclude their ſupplies ſhould increaſe too. The natural diffidence, and anxiouſneſs of age, is apt to preſs the reaſons of frugality too far, to be ever apprehenſive of an accident, and guard with too much concern.

We might enumerate a great many more imperfections with which age burdens the mind; but I have promiſed to ſpeak of ſome of the advantages which ſhould reconcile us to this ſtage of life. To talk in the divine

divine ſtrain, I might alledge, That the ſame God who knows beſt the price of his own favours, as he makes no ſmall eſtimation of age himſelf, ſo he hath thought fit to call for an high reſpect to be given to it by himſelf. Is it not a part of the inſpired law, 'Thou 'ſhalt riſe up before the hoary head, and honour the 'face of the old man, and fear thy God?' This awful reſpect and reverence to years, was ſtrictly obſerved by the old heathens.

Credebant hoc grande Nefas, & morte piandum,
Si juvenis vetulo non aſſurrexerat.———

ſays Juvenal: 'They accounted it a heinous crime, and 'to be puniſhed with death, if a young man neglected 'to riſe to his elder.' Permit me to give one inſtance of this deference, which antiquity always thought fit to pay to age, in a little ſtory which has found a place in an author that always will give diverſion. It happened at Athens, during a public repreſentation of ſome play exhibited in honour of the commonwealth, that an old gentleman came too late for a place ſuitable to his age and quality: many of the young gentlemen, who obſerved the difficulty and confuſion he was in, made ſigns to him, that they would accommodate him if he came where they ſate: the good man buſtled through the crowd accordingly. But when he came to the ſeats to which he was invited, the jeſt was, to ſit cloſe, and expoſe him as he ſtood, out of countenance, to the whole audience: the frolic went round all the Athenian benches. But on thoſe occaſions, there were alſo particular places aſſigned for foreigners: when the good man ſkulked towards the boxes appointed for the Lacedemonians, that honeſt people, more virtuous, than polite, roſe up all to a man, and with the greateſt reſpect received him amongſt them. The Athenians being ſuddenly touched with a ſenſe of the Spartan virtue, and their own degeneracy, gave a thunder of applauſe; and the old man cried out, 'The Athenians 'underſtand what is good; but the Lacedemonians 'practiſe

'practiſe it.' That age has a peculiar right to regard, is paſt diſpute; nature teaches it; religion enjoins it; and cuſtom has made it good. If we examine the reaſons of this privilege, we ſhall find them ſatisfactory and well grounded. For,

Old age is moſt remarkable for its knowledge and wiſdom; when we firſt come into the world, we are unimproved in both parts of our nature; neither our limbs nor underſtanding are born at their full length, but grow up to their ſtature by gradual advances. Thoſe who have had the longeſt time to furniſh and improve in, muſt, generally ſpeaking, be the wiſeſt people, where care and other advantages are equal. Men of years have ſeen greater variety of events, have more opportunities of remarking humours and intereſts: thus therefore they may trace their actions to the firſt exerciſes of reaſon. Farther, old perſons have the beſt opportunities for reviewing their opinions, and bringing their thoughts to a ſecond teſt, for trying what they took upon truſt, and correcting the errors of education. And thus their judgment becomes more exact: they may know more things, and know them better and more uſefully than others.

A greater privilege of age than theſe, is a freedom from thoſe impetuous paſſions, wherewith youth is commonly overſwayed; for as our natural heat decays, ſo does the heat of our inordinate affections abate, and the weakened appetites are ſubdued to reaſon. The temperate old man, in his ſtory, when one ſhewed him a beautiful face, could anſwer, 'I have long ſince 'left to be eye-ſick!' And another could as frankly ſay of pleaſure, 'I have gladly withdrawn myſelf from 'the ſervice of that imperious miſtreſs!' The leſs our minds have to do with our bodies, the better; and if age puts an end to our deſires, and does the buſineſs of virtue, there can be no cauſe of complaint.

Our exemption from paſſions, in our age, is partly the effect of conviction and experience; the danger is conſidered better, and the indecency more diſcovered than formerly. The conſtitution likewiſe contributes

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to its ſhare; the current of the blood moves more gently, and the heat of the ſpirits abate. This change makes the mind more abſolute, and the counſels of reaſon better guarded. And thus the exceſſes of anger and deſire grow leſs intemperate. Age views the undertaking on all ſides, and makes fewer omiſſions in the ſcheme: it computes more exactly upon hopes and fears, and weighs difficulty and ſucceſs with better judgment. In ſhort, this is the time in which the mind is moſt diſcerning and diſpaſſionate, furniſhed with the beſt materials for wiſdom, and beſt diſpoſed to uſe them.

In the next place, we accuſe our age of many weakneſſes and indiſpoſitions; but theſe imputations muſt not be univerſal: many of theſe are the faults of the perſon, not of the age. As all wine doth not turn ſour with age, no more doth every nature. There are thoſe who are pettiſh and crabbed in youth: there are, on the contrary, thoſe who are mild, gentle, and ſociable, in their decayed years. There are thoſe who are crazy in their prime; and there are thoſe who in their wain are vigorous: there are thoſe, who, before the fulneſs of their age, have loſt their memory; and there are thoſe whoſe intellectuals have ſo happily held out, that they have been beſt at the laſt. Many of the ancient philoſophers and Romans were examples of this truth. Health, vigour, and ſenſe, hold out ſometimes to the length of a long journey. Plato enjoyed them all at eighty; and ſo did the elder Cato. Tully was more than ſixty when he wrote his famous Philippics; in which, his rhetoric is not only more correct, but more moving and tempeſtuous, than in his younger orations.

To make up the ſum of our advantages from years, I think the chief benefit of our age, is our near approach to our journey's end: for the end of all motion is reſt; which when we have once attained, there remains nothing but fruition. Now, our age brings us (after a weary race) within ſome breathings of our goal: for if young men may die, old men muſt.

The

The carnal heart may bewail his condition, and complain of nature as niggardly in her diſpenſations of the ſhorteſt time to her nobleſt creature, envying the oaks which many generations of men muſt leave ſtanding, and in a ſtate of flouriſhing. This repining is no wonder in him, who is ſuch a worldling, that he thinks himſelf here at home, and looks upon death as a baniſhment: he hath placed his heaven here below; and can ſee nothing in his remove, but either annihilation or torment: but 'for Chriſtians, who know that whilſt 'we are preſent in the body, we are abſent from the 'Lord;' and do juſtly account ourſelves foreigners, our life a pilgrimage, and heaven our home; how can we but rejoice, that after a tedious and painful travel, we do now draw near to the threſhold of our Father's houſe, wherein we know there are many manſions, and all glorious? Should we not bluſh to hear an heathen ſay, 'If God would offer me the choice of re-'newing my age, and returning to my firſt childhood, 'I ſhould heartily refuſe it; for I ſhould be loth, after 'I have paſſed ſo much of my race to be called back 'from the goal to the bars of my firſt ſetting out?' And ſhall a Chriſtian whine and pine at the thought of his diſſolution? Where is our faith of an heaven, if, having been ſo long ſea-beaten, we be loth to think of putting into the ſafe and bleſſed harbour of immortality?

It is time, that I ſhould think of ending with advice, how we may make our latter days moſt eaſy and pleaſant. If we would enter upon age with advantage, we muſt take care to be regular and ſignificant in our youth. *Libidinoſa etenim & intemperans Adoleſcentia, fœtum corpus tradit ſenectuti*, ſays Cicero. A diſſolute and intemperate youth delivers the body up weak to age. Intemperance antedates infirmities, and doubles them: it revenges its own exceſſes, and plunges us ſooner and deeper in the mire, than otherwiſe we ſhould fall. He that would have his health hold out, muſt not live too faſt. A man ſhould huſband his conſtitution, and not throw it away till he has done living,

if he can help it. Not to provide thus far, is to betray our ſenſes, and prove falſe to the intereſt of eaſe and pleaſure. And as to the mind, a well-managed life will be of great ſervice.

In ſhort, if we would be well provided, we muſt begin betimes. Habits of virtue, and handſome performances, are the beſt preparatives. Let's lay in a ſtock of good actions before-hand: theſe will ſecure our credit without, and our peace within. 'Tis true, a good conſcience won't make a man immortal: but yet the quiet of his mind often keeps him from wearing out ſo faſt: it ſmooths his paſſage to the other world, and makes him ſlide into the grave by a more gentle and inſenſible motion. And when the body is ſhaken with diſeaſes, when it bends under time or accident, and appears juſt ſinking into ruin, 'tis ſometimes ſtrangely ſupported from within: the man is propped up by the ſtrength of thought, and lives upon the chearfulneſs and vigour of the ſpirit. Pleaſant retroſpections, eaſy thought, and comfortable preſages, are admirable opiates; they help to aſſwage the anguiſhes, and diſarm the diſtempers of age; and almoſt makes a man deſpiſe his miſery.

To be afraid of growing old, is to be afraid of growing wiſe, and being immortal: as if we could be happy too ſoon! one would think, we ſhould be glad to go upon a further diſcovery; and that curioſity ſhould almoſt carry us into the other world. Do we not complain of diſtaſtes in this life? Do we not feel a ſatiety of the ſame images? What is there then further to detain our fancies here below? Death conſider'd in this light, is no more than paſſing from one entertainment to another. If the preſent objects are grown tireſome and diſtaſteful, it is in order to prepare our minds for a more exquiſite reliſh for thoſe which are freſh and new: if the good things we have hitherto enjoyed are tranſient, they will be ſucceeded by thoſe which the inexhauſtible power of the Deity will ſupply to eternal ages: if the pleaſures of our preſent ſtate are blended with pain and uneaſineſs, our future will

conſiſt of ſincere unmixed delights: bleſſed hope! the thought whereof turns the very impreſſions of our nature into occaſions of comfort and joy.

But our fears prevail, and death is viewed with the utmoſt horror. We were not men, if we did not fear him; he is the king of terror, and therefore may, and muſt command it: but would we acquaint ourſelves with him more, we ſhould fear him leſs. Let us innure our eyes to the ſight of death, and that face ſhall begin not to diſpleaſe us. Our fears are apt to imagine, and to aggravate evils. We may look upon him as an utter abolition or extinction of our being; and nature then muſt needs ſhrink back at the thought of not being at all. But this is a foul and dangerous miſpriſion: what reaſon have we to be afflicted with that which is the common condition of mankind? Death is the ſame to all; the difference is in the diſpoſition of the entertainers. Could we have been then capable of the uſe of our reaſon, we ſhould have been more afraid of coming into the world, than we are now of going out: for our birth begins our miſeries; our death ends them. Our birth enters the beſt of men into a wretched world; our death enters the good into a world of glory. But the ſoul and body, like old companions, are loath to part; yet it is but the forbearing their wonted ſociety for a while; they do but take leave of each other until they meet again, never to be divided. Did we not believe a reſurrection of the one part, and a reuniting of the other, we had reaſon to be utterly daunted with the thought of a diſſolution; but now we have no cauſe to be diſmayed with a little intermiſſion. The death which we ſo fear and flee from, doth but reſpite life for a while; doth not take it away; the day will come, which ſhall reſtore us to the light again. When we are weary of our days labour, are we afraid of reſt? The philoſophers of old were wont to call ſleep the brother of death; death is no other than ſleep itſelf; a ſleep both ſure and ſweet: when we lie down at night to our repoſe, we cannot be ſo certain to awake again in the morning as when we lay ourſelves down in death; we are ſure to awake in the morning of the reſurrection. We

We know but one way of fortifying our ſouls againſt the gloomy preſages and terrors of mind; and that is, by ſecuring to ourſelves the friendſhip and protection of that being, who diſpoſes of events and governs futurity. He ſees, at one view, the whole thread of our exiſtence; not only that part of it which we have already paſſed through, but that which runs forward into all the depths of eternity. When we lay us down to ſleep, we ſhould recommend ourſelves to his care; when we awake we ſhould give ourſelves up to his direction. Amidſt all the evils that threaten us, we ſhould look up to him for help, and queſtion not but he will either avert them, or turn them to our advantage. Though we know neither the time nor the manner of the death we are to die, we ſhould not be at all ſollicitous about it; becauſe we are ſure that he knows them both, and that he will not fail to comfort and ſupport us under them.

DEATH.

WHEN a good old age has advanced our knowledge, and fully acquainted us with the vexation that attends the moſt happy on this ſide heaven; when the fever of youth is abated, and ſerenity keeps down our paſſions; when we are no longer dazzled with falſe felicities, but view things as they really are; when by the decays of nature and fancy, reaſon breaks its confinement, no longer reſtrained by the deluding charms of ſin, nor the ſtrong bars of a briſk and warm conſtitution; when the moſt agreeable pleaſures have loſt their bait, and every occurrence brings pain and uneaſineſs; when our bodies are weak and diſtempered, and our minds diſſatisfied with their crazy habitation; when pride and gaiety are gone, and ſound judgment ſupplies the room of imagination; when the hurry of a buſy world becomes irkſome, 'tis [then, that with an holy regard to the quiet and compoſure of another better ſtate, we may juſtly wiſh we 'had wings like 'a dove, to fly away, and be at reſt.'

Yet, the love of life, and the dread of death, are ſo natural to us, that it ſeems almoſt impoſſible, willingly to renounce the one, and court the other. For every thing naturally tends to its own preſervation; and an abhorrence from death is the neceſſary conſequence of that ſelf-love, which is implanted in us all. Every trembling and emotion then, at the approach

approach of death, is no ways culpable. If we might go to Chriſt, as Enoch and Elijah did, without dying; this would be agreeable: or, if we could be of that number, who ſhall be found alive at our Lord's coming, and be changed in a moment, this muſt be pleaſing to nature, as it commits no violence upon it.

But however, ſince the ordinary way to go to Chriſt, is to paſs through the valley of the ſhadow of death, there is nothing in our natural abhorrence of a diſſolution which ought not to be ſurmounted by reaſon, by reflection, by a firm perſuaſion of the truth in the goſpel, and by a well-grounded hope of its promiſes. Why cannot religion do that which philoſophy has often done? Why cannot religion do that which ambition, and a thirſt after glory, does every day? How many brave ſoldiers have, by mere imagination, by a deſire only of empty honour, conquered the fear of death, and met it, nay, purſued it, with eagerneſs and intrepidity?

And, ſurely then, the certainty of an immortal life, and of endleſs felicity, ought to be as prevailing with us! But when all are joined, and with united force arm our reſolution; when the Chriſtian ſees that all below him is troubleſome and uneaſy, and knows that all above is ſerene and quiet; knows, that whatever diſturbs him here, he ſhall there enjoy an everlaſting tranquillity; this muſt needs vanquiſh his fear of death.

Yet we muſt not be our own murderers, either by arming ourſelves againſt our own fleſh, or by rejecting proper nouriſhment, or proper medicines; or by raſhly running into certain danger, when we have no buſineſs there. We may deſire death, but in God's appointment and time, by maintaining the poſt that he has allotted us, and by ſtrictly adhering to our duty; and without attempting ourſelves to force our priſon; we muſt wait till the angel of the Lord ſets us free, by looſing our chains, and opening the gates of our confinement.

However, we ſhould always prefer death, out of a zeal to reſt with Chriſt, and when God and nature call us, to all the advantages of a life here, how pleaſurable or pompous ſoever. And this will appear highly reaſonable, if we conſider, that the value, the ſatisfactions, and the reſt of heaven, do more than compenſate all that we can quit here, though we were to enjoy all the delights of the world, in their beſt and moſt inviting circumſtances.

The life of man here, even of the moſt proſperous, is ſtill ſubject to innumerable miſeries. Had we no other evils to graple with, our own fears, and our own deſires, would render us unhappy; whereas, in a ſtate of eternal reſt, of perfect joy and fruition, we can have nothing to fear, nothing to deſire: and it is death that puts us into the poſſeſſion of ſo much bliſs, by conducting us to a place where hunger and thirſt, fatigue and poverty, ſhall never more diſturb us; where the fever, the gout, and the ſtone, ſhall no longer torment us; where we ſhall no more bewail the treachery of falſe friends, nor the ſlanders, the frauds, the injuſtice, the violence of ſecret or profeſſed enemies.

Nor is human life only expoſed to natural miſeries, but is ſubject to moral evils too. We are inceſſantly expoſed to the ſeduction of our ſenſes, the ſollicitations of conſtitution, the contagion of ill examples, the perſuaſions of the wicked, and the ſnares of the devil. But in heaven there is everlaſting eaſe and ſecurity, ſatisfaction and reſt; which far excel all the delights of the world, even in their beſt and moſt inviting circumſtances. The world has its riches, honours and pleaſures; but neither of them are very great, or certain; and none of them can afford an equal, durable, or an uninterrupted joy. But in heaven, there is quite the reverſe, and every enjoyment is full and compleat, not ſatiating, nor deluding. The ſoul is capable of three general operations; of knowing, loving, and feeling; all ſprings of action, and what adminiſter to numberleſs delights.

We

We cannot tell what difference in degree there will be between our happineſs before our reſurrection, and our perfect glory after it: but yet it is indiſputable, that our ſouls diſengaged from our bodies, exalted above all viſible things, and admitted to the preſence of Chriſt, ſhall there know God, and his bleſſed Son, in a manner not to be conceived here: for what ſhall then clog their activity, weaken their powers, or ſtop their penetration? Is it not out of doubt, that an underſtanding ſo pure, and ſo extended, always in motion, always employed in diſcovering new objects, always in a condition of forming juſt ideas, always at the very fountain of truth, always enlightened by him who is brightneſs itſelf, alwāys conſidering cauſes and their effects, and always directing theſe truths, and theſe diſcoveries, to raiſe itſelf up to God; to admire, to praiſe, and to adore him? Is it not evident, I ſay, that an underſtanding ſo pure and extended, ſo buſied and employed, muſt neceſſarily produce the moſt charming knowledge, and be to us a perpetual fund of rapture, joy, and delight?

The next perfection of the ſoul, is love: and what ſhall we love here? Either what is ill, or what is imperfect? And how often does our love prove our miſery! In heaven, we ſhall love nothing, but what we ought to love; and our love there, ſhall be always ſatisfied. How free will it be, when it has no diſtractions, no obſtacles to oppoſe it? How pure will it be, when it has no carnal motives intermixed with it? And how vaſt will it be, when we ſhall love in proportion to our knowledge, and that knowledge is ſo prodigious and ſo perfect.

To feel, is alſo a property of the ſoul: 'tis capable of many agreeable ſenſations; but 'tis eaſy to imagine, that in heaven, 'twill have infinitely more, and thoſe infinitely more agreeable, more lively and unconfined. And who can declare, what pleaſures will pour in upon our ſouls from a kind and beneficent God, who is no longer reſtrained by his hatred

to ſin, but himſelf takes pleaſure in making us happy? Such pleaſures, ſurely, muſt be beatific as their donor! Nor will the company that we ſhall meet with in heaven, be an inconſiderable part of the felicities of that place. There is no greater ſatisfaction in the world, than the converſation of a few honeſt, wiſe, and undeſigning people; and yet, alas! this is a ſatisfaction as ſcarce, as it is agreeable: but what charms may we not expect from the converſation of glorified ſaints, nay, of our Lord himſelf?

Why then ſhould people make ſuch a rout about dying, when 'tis the ready road to a ſtate of immortality? The agonies and convulſions in the article of expiring, are over in a trice, and then come the moſt refined and improved conceptions: and this is a conſideration, which the earlier we begin to preſs home upon ourſelves, the more effectually we ſhall find it conduce to the vanquiſhing all our fears and apprehenſions of death; and, 'till that point is gained, a man's life muſt be very uncomfortable to him: for we all know full well, that die we muſt, ſome time or other, and, for aught we know, before to-morrow morning. Conſequently we can never bear up briſkly, and ſet a good face upon it, ſo long as we are hag-ridden with the horror of a change, which may poſſibly overtake us the next minute. A wiſe man is ever moſt willing to die; and a fool cannot like it by any means; becauſe the one ſees before him to the end of his journey, and diſcovers how bleſſed a country he is going to; while the other is dim and purblind, and can't look forward.

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